ENTERTAINMENT / G1

PDI man in Hollywood: Angelina Jolie opens up for the first time

BUSINESS / B1

RP exporters to lose US duty-free access

NEWS / A2

Ramon Obusan, National Artist for Dance, dead at 68

SPORTS / A25

Asiad bronze medalist Bibat ousted from RP Amateur golf tilt

Local officials divided over people's initiative

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Edra L. Benedicto

DESPITE THE RENEWED PITCH OF PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo, Charter change has become such a prickly issue that even local government officials are at odds over it.

Carlo Fortuna, secretary general of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap),

LOCAL OFFICIALS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, December 22, 2006 ★★ 11 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 14 P18 website: inquirer.net

A series of unfortunate incidents at int'l airports

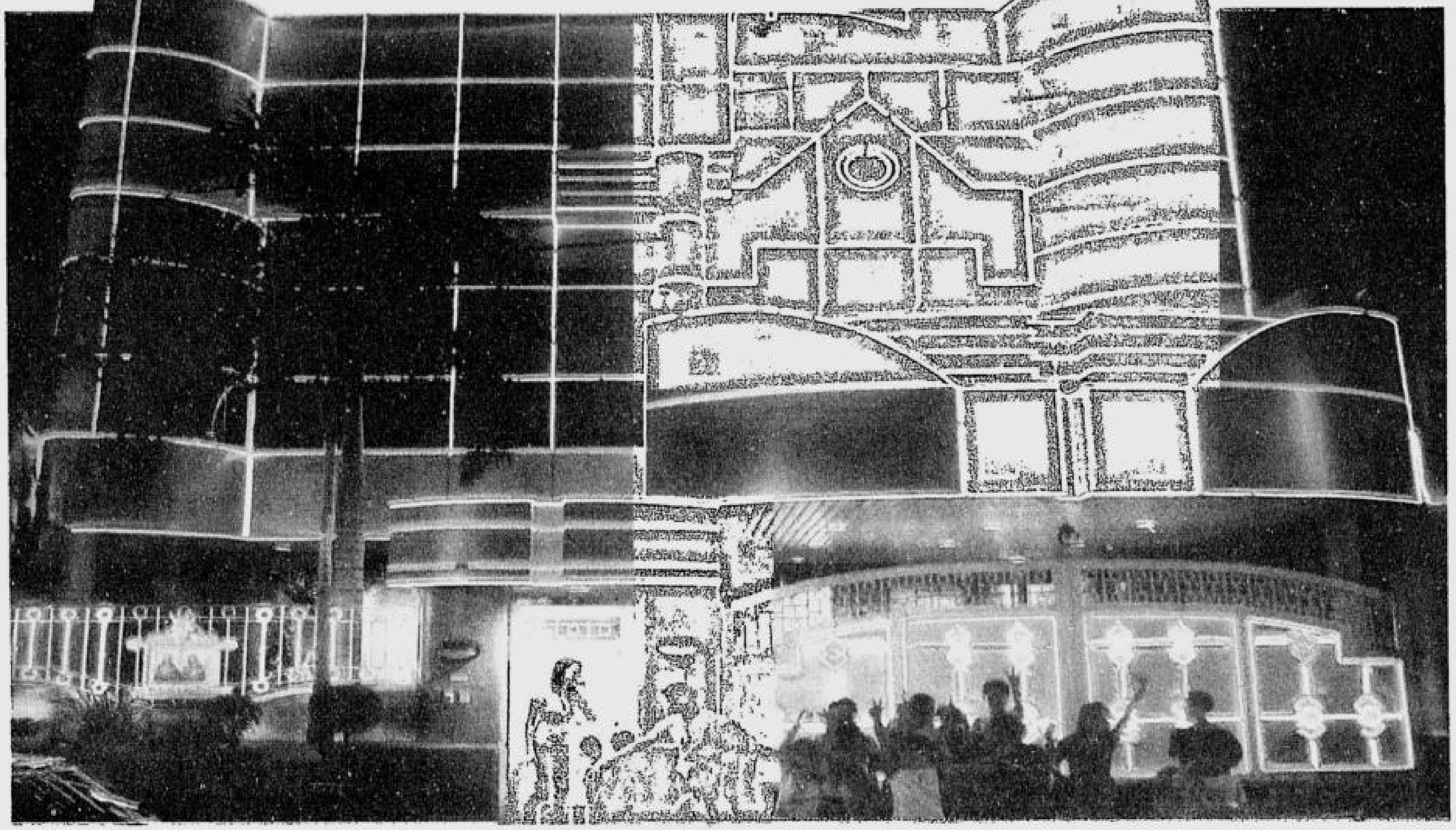
LOS ANGELES—"IF A baby can get through, what the hell else can get through?"

This was the reaction of Brian Sullivan, a retired Federal Aviation Administration security

A SERIES/ A8

KAYA AKO, SA BAHAY NA LANG!

4-day holiday truce OKd



HOUSE OF LIGHTS
Every year, the house on Policarpio Street is the first to light up, as it did on Nov. 21, when this photo was taken. Jimmy and Norma Lim, owners of the now famous house in Mandaluyong, bring the joy of Christmas to countless families who come from all over just to watch the lights fantastic. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

AFP to halt offensives vs Reds but not vs Abus

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo yesterday approved a unilateral suspension of offensive military operations against the communist New People's Army for four days during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Ms Arroyo approved Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr.'s recommendation to suspend military offensives on Dec. 24-25 and Dec. 31-Jan. 1.

Esperon announced the approval after emerging from an hourlong conference with the President and the military top brass in Camp Aguinaldo.

Ms Arroyo, who has been the acting defense secretary since her former chief legal counsel, Avelino Cruz, resigned from the post on Nov. 30, attended simple ceremonies marking the AFP's 71st founding anniversary.

"We are announcing the President's approval (of) the unilateral suspension of offensive military operations," Esperon said. "This has nothing to do with any peace talks. It is simply a Yuletide gesture."

Last year, Malacañang declared a similar four-day unilateral truce against the guerrillas.

The Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New Peo-

4-DAY HOLIDAY/ A6

Isafp holds lavish Christmas bash with 'Emperor'

By Fe Zamora

AMID SHOUTS OF "LONG LIVE THE EMperor," Armed Forces intelligence chief Brig. Gen. Delfin Bangit threw P500 bills, like they were candy, at the Isafp Christmas party held on Wednesday night.

Easily the grandest party in Camp Aguinaldo this season, the Christmas bash of the Intelligence Service of the AFP turned the highly secured compound into a rock concert-cum-Oktoberfest-cum-noontime TV show, complete with stand-up comics from popular bars on Timog and Quezon Avenue.

One insider told the INQUIRER that "it was the most lavish" Christmas party ever celebrated at the Isafp headquarters.

AFP information officer Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro declined to comment on the Isafp party. "I don't really know what transpired during the party," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

An Isafp employee defended Bangit. "He gave gifts in the spirit of Christmas. Besides, most of the raffle prizes were solicited," the employee said on condition that her name would not be published.

An Isafp operative said the party was intended to boost the morale of Isafp. Which is probably why music from three live bands could be heard on the side streets outside the compound. They performed '70s hits and today's Pinoy rap.

"It's eat all you can, drink all you can," an INQUIRER source said.

The sumptuous fare included six roasted calves and an assortment of delicacies spread out on U-shaped buffet tables, the

ISAFP/ A10

Humane treatment of elderly urged

By Maria Congee S. Gomez
Contributor

"ELDER ABUSE" REFERS TO AN INTENtional negligent act by a caregiver that causes harm to a vulnerable adult.

The abuse may take the form of physical, emotional or sexual exploitation, or abandonment.

Dr. Emmanuel Gatchalian Sr., founder and head of the St. Luke's Geriatric Center, says that while elder abuse is not prevalent in the Philippines, it exists in both low-income and well-achieved families.

The telltale signs of elder abuse are pressure marks on the body, broken bones, depression, unexplained withdrawal from normal activities, unattended medical needs, or strained, tense relationships.

According to geriatric studies, caregivers engage in elder abuse when they are tired. They angrily express their fatigue, shout, or make threats.

Children of affluent families may craftily manipulate legal issues, especially documents.

Some may leave their parents in institutions or hospitals on a long-term basis, which, Gatchalian says, is tantamount to abandonment.

"Elders are not exactly happy to be resettled. They want to remain in their house because intimacy among family members is important to them as they age. And they need to be constantly reas-

HUMANE/ A8

ARNOLD ALMACEN

CONTROVERSIAL SHOW
Spectators watch keenly as a sea lion balances an umbrella on her snout during a marine entertainment show at SM Mall of Asia. Outside, environmentalists and animal welfare activists picketed, urging the government to stop such shows which they said are inhumane. (*Story in Metro, Page A21*)

Laoag radioman stabbed dead

By Cristina Arzadon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAOAG CITY—RADIO REPORTER Andres "Andy" Acosta had just left a Christmas party of media colleagues at a hotel here at 10 p.m. Wednesday when he was stabbed in the belly on his way home.

Acosta, 46, a reporter of dzJC Aksyon Radyo, managed to drive himself on his motorcycle to the Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital but passed out on reaching its gate.

He was pronounced dead before midnight—the 12th media personality to be killed this year in the Philippines, described as the most dangerous place for journalists after war-torn Iraq, and the 49th since Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became President in 2001.

In a statement, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines condemned the attack and urged the Arroyo government to end the "culture of impunity" that has allowed the killings to continue.

Only two of the cases have been resolved with the conviction on Nov. 29, 2005, of the accused in the murder of Edgar Damalerio nine months earlier and on Oct. 6

LAOAG/ A6

Muslim celebration starts Dec. 25

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE TWO-STORY HOUSE, A stone's throw from the Blue Mosque in a Muslim enclave in Taguig City, gleams with white and green lights bought from a popular shopping mall in nearby Makati.

The random passerby would think it was another Christian household caught in the Yuletide spirit in this predominantly Catholic country.

But its owner, Muslim scholar Taha Basman, did not decorate his home in Maharlika Village to welcome Jesus Christ. His own Islamic faith tells him that Christ is but one of many prophets mentioned in the Koran.

Basman, 54, and the rest of the Muslim world eagerly await Dec. 25 to celebrate Eid ul-Adha, which marks the end of the pilgrimage *(hajj)* of Muslims who have made it to the holy city of Mecca.

Also to be commemorated on

MUSLIM/ A10

Virgin ma awaits arrival of offspring

CHESTER, ENGLAND—AS CHRISTMAS approaches, a virgin mother is anxiously awaiting the arrival of her offspring. She's Flora, the Komodo dragon.

In an evolutionary twist, Flora has managed to become pregnant all on her own without any male help. It would seem the timing is auspicious: The seven baby Komodo dragons are due this festive season.

"We were blown away when we realized what she'd done," said Kevin Buley, a reptile expert at Flora's home at the Chester Zoo in this town in northern England.

"But we certainly won't be naming any of the hatchlings Jesus," Buley said.

Other reptile species reproduce asexually in a process known as parthenogenesis. But Flora's virginal conception, and that of another Komodo dragon earlier this year at the London Zoo, are the first time the process has been documented in a Komodo dragon.

The reptiles, renowned for their intelligence, are native to Indonesia. They are the world's largest lizards and have no natural predators—making them on par with sharks and lions at the pinnacle of the animal kingdom.

The cases of Flora and the London lizard, Sungai, are described in a paper published on Thursday in Nature.

Parthenogenesis is a process in which eggs become embryos without male fer-

VIRGIN/ A10

FLORA, a Komodo dragon, is both an expectant "mother" and "father." AFP

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/21/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rainy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Is P4.7-B fund for polls? NGO asks

By Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

A GROUP MONITORING HOW THE GOVERNMENT spends people's money warned of the possible misuse of a P4.7-billion allocation supposedly for a nationwide school feeding program, saying it might end up as government largesse in next year's elections.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition yesterday said the House of Representatives, dominated by President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies, insist on the multibillion-peso allocation for the School Feeding Program despite reports of irregularities in its implementation.

"The insistence of the House panel for the retention of P4.7-billion allocation and the rice distribution component of this administration proposal (despite) numerous accounts of irregularities in its implementation is highly suspect," said FDC president Ana Maria Nemenzo.

One of the issues raised over the feeding program is the distribution of sub-standard imported rice to school children in exchange for their attendance in school.

"The lessons on the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani rice program in 2004 should not escape each and every Filipino at this early point," she added.

The Department of Agriculture's farm inputs program was allegedly the source of the P728-million fertilizer scam after the DA allegedly disbursed funds even for non-agricultural areas such as Quezon City.

The funds were allegedly used to fund the administration's campaign kitty for the election of Ms Arroyo.

"While the legislators seek to shroud these facts with claims that this program is welcomed by many poor families, FDC and the Youth Against the Debt believes that this is genuinely patronage politics at work," Nemenzo said.

As in other government programs in 2004 that allegedly benefited the poor before the elections, FDC said it believes the feeding program will also serve as a tool for the administration to buy votes.

"This manifests how the poor become easy prey for political ends. The problem of deepening and widespread poverty should be addressed squarely-through a serious poverty reduction program no strings attached or without the names of politicians inscribed in the packaging of relief items," Nemenzo said.

The FDC made the statement in the wake of pronouncements made by House appropriations committee chair Albay Rep. Joey Salceda that the passage of the proposed P1.126 trillion national budget for 2007 will not be achieved before yearend because of the Senate and House disagreement on the feeding program.

"The FDC, together with the YAD, believe that the delay in the passage of the budget should be a cause for alarm to the Filipino taxpayers," Nemenzo said.

"While FDC and YAD believe that malnutrition among school children should be addressed and prioritized in government spending, the Senate is right to aver that the government's current school feeding program is highly dubious in motive and impact," she added.

At the Senate, senators spent their last day approving a bill that declares unlawful all forms of cheating in civil service examinations.

FINANCE Committee Chair Sen. Franklin Drilon appears to be not amused with LTFRB Chair Thompson Lantion and Land Transportation Office (LTO) acting chief Reynaldo Berroya after a Senate hearing on the budget of the Department of Transportation and Communications. ROGER MARGALLO

Nat'l Artist for Dance Obusan; 68

OBUSAN

NATIONAL ARTIST FOR Dance Ramon Obusan died yesterday of cardio-pulmonary arrest at the Makati Medical Center in Makati City. He was 68.

Obusan founded in 1972 the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group (ROFG), which earned distinction for its presentation of Filipino traditional dances.

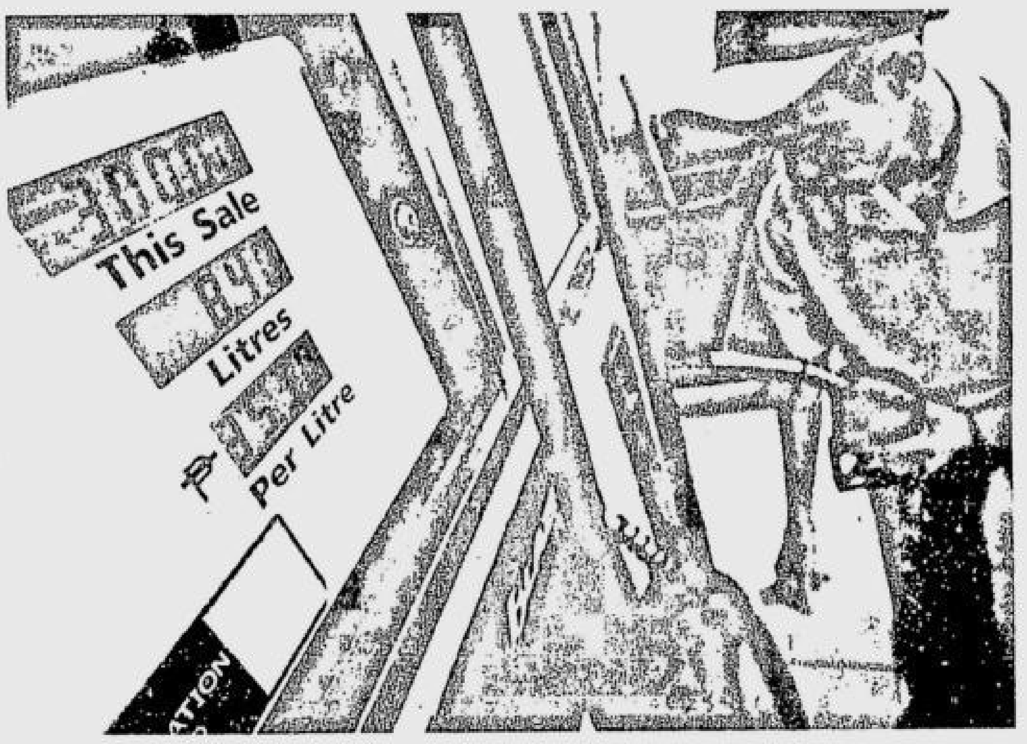
Until his death, he was overseeing the ROFG's annual Christmas program "Vamos a Belen" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Obusan was named national artist by President Macapagal-Arroyo on May 23. He was conferred the award on June 9 along with Bienvenido Lumbera (literature), Benedicto Cabrera (visual arts), Ildefonso Santos Jr. (architecture), Ronald Allan Poe aka Fernando Poe Jr. (film-posthumous), Ramon Valera (fashion design-posthumous) and Abdulmari Imao (sculpture).

His remains will lie in state at his home in Pasay City.

In a statement issued last night, the President hailed Obusan as "a true national treasure" who "distinguished himself by preserving and promoting culture through dance."

"He and the [ROFG] generated tremendous goodwill for our people and brought so much joy to audiences worldwide," Ms Arroyo said.



FILL 'ER UP. A gasoline station worker gets busy filling up cars as prices of gasoline went down by P2 per liter. The lower rates' effectivity lasts until Jan. 1. Officials hope that lower gas prices and a bid to legislate wage increases could ease the working man's burdens. REM ZAMORA

House passes on 3rd reading bill seeking P125 wage hike

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PASSED on third reading a bill that seeks to grant a P125-across the board wage increase for private sector workers before adjourning for the holidays late Wednesday.

Euphoric militant lawmakers gathered around Zamboanga del Norte Rep. Roseller Barinaga, chair of the House committee on labor, at 8:30 p.m. as they thanked the House leadership, led by Speaker Jose de Venecia, for finally fulfilling its promise to give minimum wage earners the much-needed raise in their take home pay.

Partido ng Manggagawa Rep. Renato Magtubo, one of the principal authors of House Bill No. 345, hailed the passage as a significant advance in the fight for a legislated wage increase.

"A Christmas bonus won by workers through determined struggle against resistance by capitalists, state and stonewalling by House leaders," said Magtubo, describing it as the "best thing" that the House of Representatives did before adjourning.

Barinaga told reporters that if enacted, HB 345 would grant an across the board pay hike in three tranches-P40 for the first year, P45 for the second year and P40 for the third and last year.

The Senate's version, authored by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, seeks to grant a one-time P100 wage hike.

Asked whether President Macapagal-Arroyo would be inclined to sign the measure despite stiff opposition from big business, Barinaga said: "If she will not sign it (the final version) in 30 days, it will lapse into law. I hope it happens."

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casino dubbed the passage of HB 345 as a "historic and major breakthrough."

He said the last time that Congress legislated a wage hike was in 1999 just before the power to increase wages was passed on to wage boards.

"We hope the Senate immediately passes its counterpart bill by January, so our workers can enjoy the increase at the start of the year," said Casino.

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36.94

THERE'S no better time to display gas prices than when they're down. A gasoline station takes pride in its lower gas prices. REM ZAMORA

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PRESIDENT Macapagal Arroyo arrives at the AFP Officer's Club for the celebration of the AFP's 71st anniversary. She is escorted by AFP chief Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, whom she thanked for his loyalty.

LYN RILLON

DOJ chief says public support for rallies down

By Christine O. Avendano

PUBLIC support FOR DEMONSTRATIONS against the Arroyo administration was waning and this was seen in the low turnout at last week's anti-Charter change rallies in Metro Manila.

This was the assessment of the Cabinet security cluster at a meeting in Malacañang with President Macapagal Arroyo last Wednesday, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Gonzalez said that the Cabinet security cluster, which meets almost every week, met to assess the political situation, particularly "the start up" to the anti-Charter change rallies and "looking beyond it."

He was referring to the anti-Charter change rallies that took place last week at Makati City and at the Luneta Park.

The rallies were called by groups led by the opposition, Catholic Church and civil society to protest the Palace-House campaign to amend the Constitution without the participation of the Senate. The campaign was briefly put on hold.

Gonzalez said the Cabinet security cluster assessment was that the outlook of the political situation in the country was "good."

"We believe these things (demonstrations) will be popping up and...will continue at the slightest provocation," he said in a phone interview.

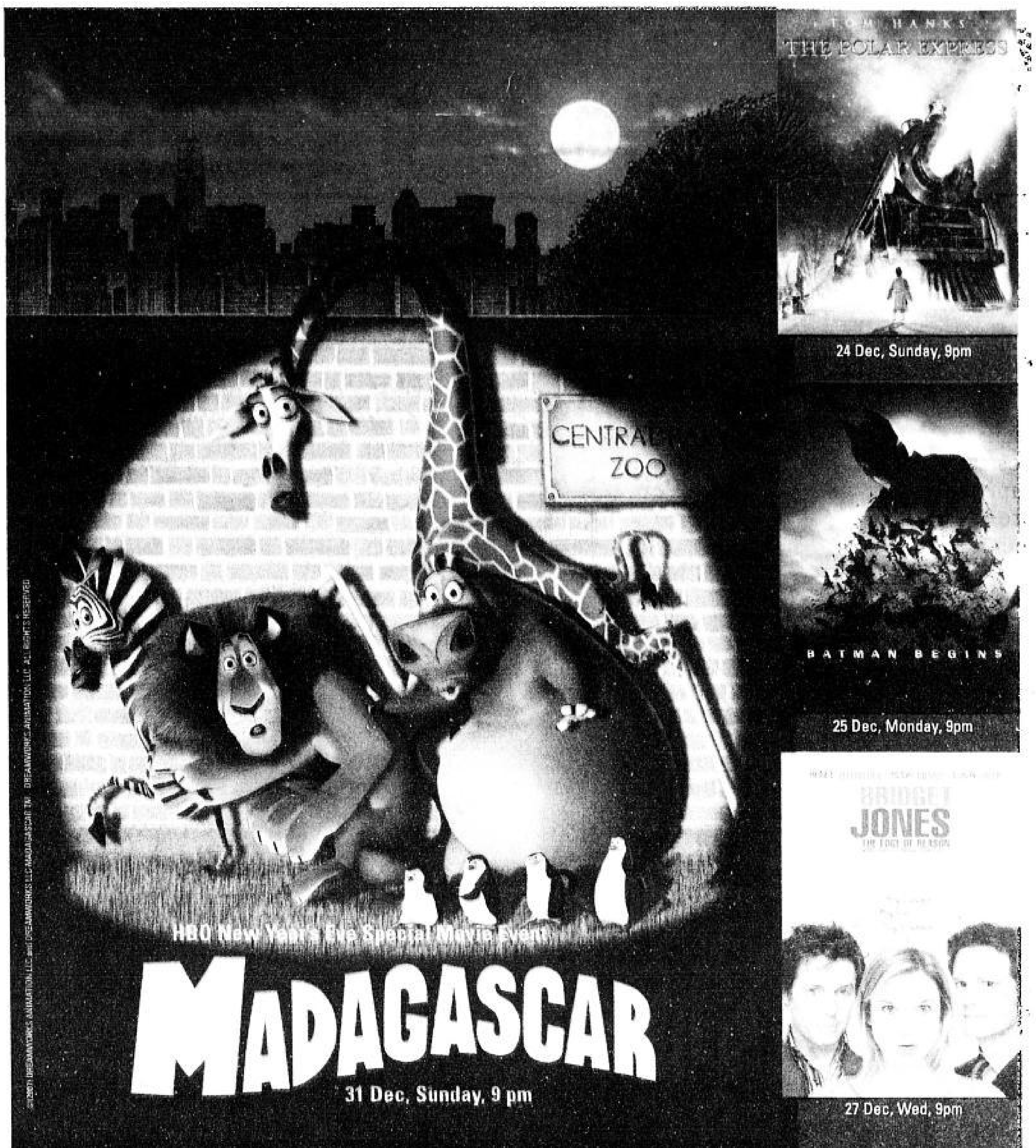
Gonzalez said that protest activities will not stop, "especially as we approach the election fever."

"They (anti-Arroyo groups) are looking for issues to exaggerate...but the enthusiasm of the public (for demonstrations) is waning," the justice secretary added.

He said this was visible in the low turnout at rallies against Charter change in Makati City last Dec. 15 and the prayer rally called by the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines last Dec. 17 at Luneta.

"If you look at it, it's the same people massing up and all of them basically are leftists," Gonzalez said.

He said he believed that public support for demonstrations was waning because people were tired.



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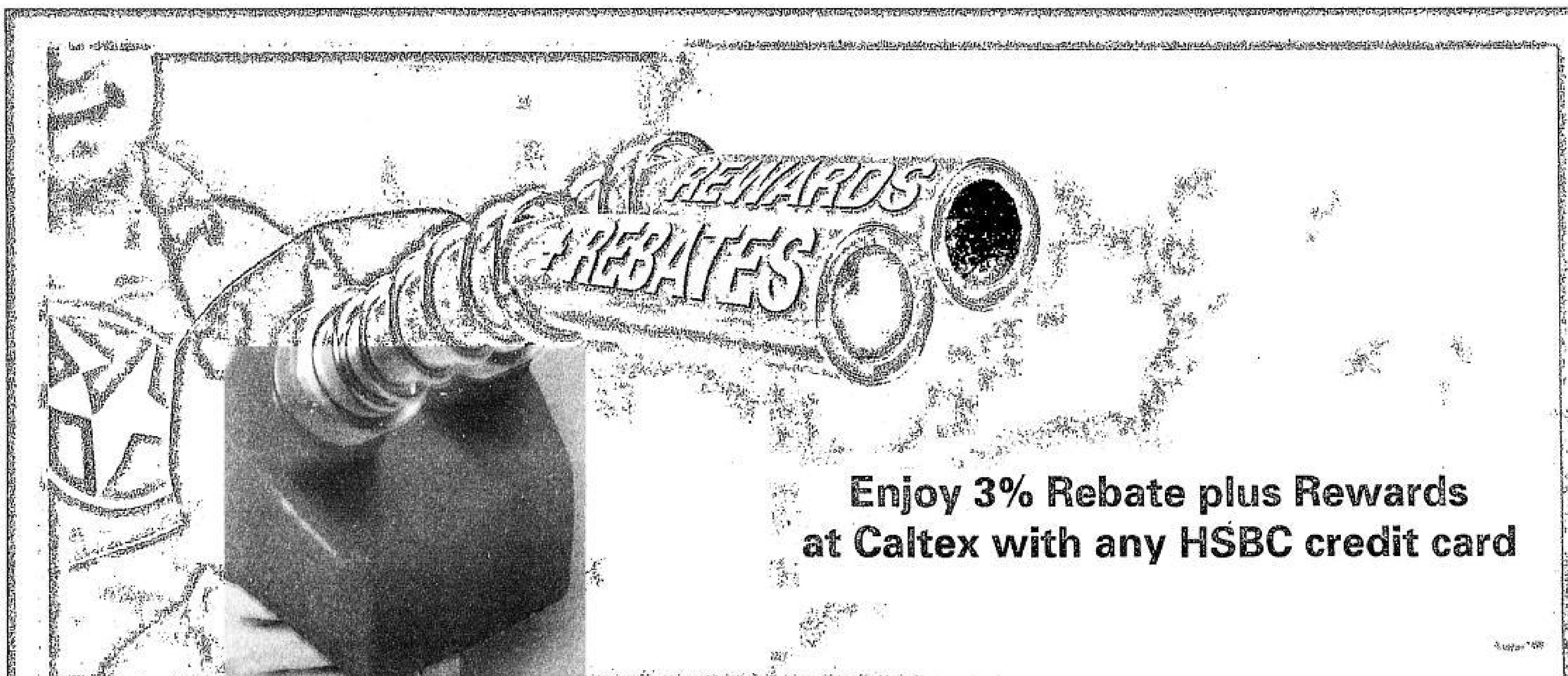
HBO



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UN to donate $2.6M for typhoon victims

By Nikko Dizon and Christian Esguerra

A $2.6 MILLION AID PACKAGE FOR VICTIMS of the typhoons that recently hit the Philippines has been approved by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA), the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said in a statement.

Aside from the aid package, a "Flash Appeal" was also launched by the OCHA and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Geneva to raise funds from the international community to help the Philippine government in rehabilitating communities that were ravaged by the typhoons, the DFA added.

The DFA said Enrique Manalo, Philippine Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, sent a report to the DFA home office informing it of the efforts of the UN in Geneva to help the typhoon victims.

"The impact of the typhoons was almost unprecedented in terms of severity and damage, and that the storms represent a significant setback to the long-term development prospects of the Albay and other affected communities," Manalo told the group that attended the launch.

The specific projects identified by the Philippine government and the UN "as part of the overall relief and rehabilitation effort" were also discussed.

The "Flash Appeal" has a "qualitative difference," focusing on the long-term approach that does not only address the immediate response to the needs of the victims but also long-term rehabilitation and "strengthening early warning capacity, in order to place the long-term development prospects of affected communities on a firm basis."

At the meeting, Manalo cited reports that said more than 3 million people had been displaced by the typhoons.

In Albay alone, nearly a thousand people were killed and hundreds of others are missing after the province was hit by Supertyphoon "Reming" early this month.

Aid continues to pour in for victims of the typhoons.

The United States Catholic Bishops Conference will donate $500,000 through its humanitarian arm, the Catholic Relief Services, according to the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

2006 Gift Giving Activity
LRP Foundation, Inc. & HAPAG-ASA
Our Lady of Peace Parish
Fourth Estate Subdivision, Sucat, Parañaque
DECEMBER 16 2006

SEASON OF GIVING
The LRP Foundation, in coordination with Hapag-Asa and Metro Bakers (Dunkin Donut), held its annual gift giving and feeding program for the Hapag-Asa Nutrition Program children of Parañaque City. The gift giving tradition was held on Dec. 16, 2006 at the Our Lady of Peace Parish in Sucat, Parañaque City. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Yule spirit alive amid devastation

LEGAZPI CITY—ANNE HERMOSURA SWAPPED Christmas shopping and parties for back-breaking construction work this week to help thousands left destitute by typhoons in the Bicol region.

The 19-year-old student nurse was one of hundreds of volunteers, from soldiers to businessmen, who passed buckets of water and building materials at a site for 600 new homes in Albay province, around 320 km south of Manila.

"It's really very difficult because I am not used to doing these things only men do," Hermosura told Reuters, wiping sweat from her face as she took a short break from carrying cement blocks in the baking heat.

"It's a rewarding and humbling experience. I couldn't believe it myself that I was capable of doing this. Of course, all of us were exhausted and tired after a day's work, but I can't explain the happiness of helping people I never even knew or met."

The Philippine government wants to build around 10,000 new homes for nearly 440,000 people displaced after a succession of typhoons crashed into the Philippines since September.

Hermosura and her friends were toiling on what will become Taysan village, a hilly area free of geological hazards that will be a new home for families displaced after Typhoon Durian destroyed their communities last month.

Supertyphoon Reming killed more than 1,000 people when its strong winds and rains sent tons of mud and water crashing from Mount Mayon, the country's most active volcano, onto nearby villages.

Around 120,000 people were still sheltering in evacuation centes in Albay after Reming's wrath.

"Twenty-one days after the last powerful typhoon to hit our country, we now begin the massive reconstruction efforts to get the affected communities back on their feet," said Glenn Rabonza, executive director of the National Disaster Coordinating Council. *Reuters*

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CONSULTANCY SERVICES ON THE "*TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL EVALUATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS BY PROSPECTIVE QUALIFIED THIRD PARTIES PURSUANT TO SECTION 59 OF THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY REFORM ACT OF 2001 AND ITS IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS*"

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
RURAL POWER PROJECT
CONSULTING SERVICES
GEF Grant No. TF052188

The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Energy (DOE) with grant assistance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), is implementing the Rural Power Project (RPP). The RPP aims to support reforms and priority investments to meet the needs of rural communities for adequate, affordable and reliable energy services

Section 59 of the Republic Act No. 9136 otherwise known as the **"Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001"** or **"EPIRA"** and Rule 14 of its Implementing Rules and Regulations allow for the entry of other Qualified Third Parties (QTPs) to areas that cannot be immediately provided with electric service by franchised Distribution Utilities. The DOE has issued the necessary policies and guidelines for QTP participation, while the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) has already promulgated the regulation rules for QTPs. To date, DOE has received two (2) detailed project proposals from pre-qualified entities that need endorsement to ERC for the issuance of QTP Authority to Operate.

The RPP seeks to undertake the subject Consultancy Services with the objective of assisting DOE in the evaluation of technical and financial proposals of prospective QTPs, particularly the determination of reasonable Full Cost Recovery Rate and the Socially/Approved Retail Rate in accordance to the rules of ERC, among others. The proposed consultancy services will be funded under the Rural Power Project, Grant No. TF052188-PH.

The DOE invites eligible individual Consultants, either local or international, to indicate their interest in providing the services. Each interested Consultant must provide information indicating that he she is qualified to perform the services by submitting the following: (1) latest Curriculum Vitae; (2) a brief write-up of his/her qualifications related to the assignment, including expertise on the technical and financial design of decentralized mini-/micro-grid projects using diesel-generators, mini-/micro-hydro systems, etc.; and, (3) description of similar assignments and work experience, if any. This assignment is deemed **"URGENT"** and, if selected, the Consultant must be immediately available for work as soon as possible.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers published in January 1977 (revised in September 1977, January 1999 and May 2002) Interested Parties may obtain further information from the contact person and address below during office hours 0800 to 1700 hours and submit their Expression of Interest on or before **8 January 2007** (up to 5:00 p.m.)

MYLENE C. CAPONGCOL
Project Director, Rural Power Project
Electric Power Industry Management Bureau
Department of Energy
Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Numbers 840-2120 or 8401401 local 132
Fax Number: 8402120 or 8405593
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4336, Series of 2006

US group says Sulu-Sulawesi Sea priority for protection

By Volt Contreras

A WASHINGTON-BASED ENVIRONMENTAL group whose partners include major US companies considers the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas as probably "the highest marine priority area on Earth."

Peter Seligmann, chair and CEO of Conservation International, gave this assessment as he welcomed the government's recent calls to protect the Verde Island Passage, a teeming marine ecosystem within the Philippine side of the Sulu-Sulawesi waters that are also shared by Malaysia and Indonesia.

He noted, though, that the donor community whom CI can tap for Verde now expects the Philippines to "deliver" on its initial plans.

Long-term strategy

He also said potential funders were looking for a long-term strategy of the recipient country wherein conservation could go hand in hand with job-creation and the "extractive industries" do not sap natural resources dry.

"There has to be government commitment. We have to be convinced that the solutions developed in the Philippines are going to work. Once you define that, I don't think there's going to be difficulty finding financial resources," said Seligmann, who met with local partners in Manila last month and personally saw Verde's treasures on a diving trip.

CI is a partner in a two-year-old, private sector initiative with power producer First Gen Corp. and the First Philippine Conservation Inc. to protect Verde from destructive practices and promote it for ecotourism.

He said CI had been telling donor companies that Sulu-Sulawesi was "one of the highest, if not the highest marine (conservation) priority area on Earth."

Among the philanthropists currently supporting the effort is the Walton family who owns the retail giant Wal-Mart, he said.

Nationally protected area

"So for the Philippines, it's now a matter of whether it can deliver," he said in an interview with the INQUIRER.

President Macapagal-Arroyo last Nov. 8 issued an executive order declaring Verde passage, a sea lane between the provinces of Batangas and Mindoro, a national protected area.

The EO came days after the release of a three-year biodiversity study by the World Conservation Union showing that Verde's waters host up to 1,736 overlapping marine species in a span of just over 10 kilometers.

This earned Verde the record of having the highest concentration of marine life in the world, according to the study titled "The Center of the Center of Marine Shorefish Biodiversity: The Philippine Islands."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 22, 2006
3rd Week of Advent

1st Reading: 1 Sam 1:24-28
Gospel: Luke 1:46-56

And Mary said:

"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit exults in God my savior!

He has looked upon his servant in her lowliness, and people forever will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me, Holy is his Name!

From age to age his mercy extends to those who live in his presence.

He has acted with power and done wonders, and scattered the proud with their plans.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up those who are downtrodden.

He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

He held out his hand to Israel, his servant, for he remembered his mercy, even as he promised our fathers,

Abraham and his descendants forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary

We keep meeting our ancestors. Hannah brings Samuel and returns him to God-as the gift was given, so she gives him back to the service of the Holy One of God. And Mary recognizes the goodness of God to her and all the poor and those faithful to God's promises. She prays Israel to hear what God has done for them since the beginning and how the promises are coming true. And her son will scatter the proud, lift the lowly, feed the hungry, depose the mighty and send off the rich and selfish, ever mindful of Mercy. The promises will come true. She is staking her life on them. Are we staking our lives and days on the promises of our God among us?

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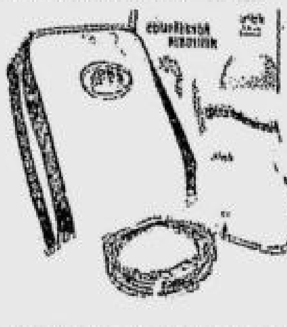

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Lancer 2.0 GSR A/T	958,000	90,000	74,454	50,958	40,609	28,940	23,159	19,936	17,954
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3 WARRANTY

4-day holiday truce OKd

From page A1

ple's Army, did not call a similar truce declaration, but said NPA fighters would merely be on "defensive mode" during the truce.

The CPP-NPA has so far not announced a truce for this year.

"Well, they can respond if they want (to) but as I said, it's a unilateral declaration of suspension of offensive military operations," Esperon said, dismissively.

Aside from allowing the nation to celebrate Christmas in peace, such truce is also meant to give soldiers in the front lines some respite during the holidays.

Offensive vs Moro rebels

There will be no similar suspension of offensive military operations against extremist rebels in Sulu belonging to the Abu Sayyaf and the Jemaah Islamiyah.

The military did not recommend any suspension of hostilities in Sulu, saying they did not want to give the Moro rebels time to regroup.

Around 8,000 troops, mostly from elite forces, have been deployed to Sulu since August to pursue known leaders of the Abu Sayyaf and at least two Indonesian JI leaders believed to be behind the 2002 terrorist attack in Bali, Indonesia.

Ms Arroyo also approved yesterday Oplan Bantay Laya II, the military's new internal security master plan aimed at defeating the insurgency by 2010, when her term ends. The new plan succeeds the five-year Oplan Bantay Laya that started in 2002.

"We are ready to submit to the Commander in Chief Oplan Bantay Laya II to defeat the CPP-NPA by 2010, destroy the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) and contain the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front)," Esperon said during the anniversary ceremonies.

After the conference, he said the President had approved the master plan.

"So, 2010 is a set deadline for us to finish these communist terrorists," Esperon said.

Esperon said that in the five years that Oplan Bantay Laya I was in force, the armed strength of the NPA was brought down to 7,100 from 12,000.

He also claimed that the number of barangays "affected" by NPA influence has started to decline from a peak of 12,510 in December 2004 to 2,115 in the latest count.

This year, Esperon went on, a CPP-NPA regional secretary was killed while 13 other guerrilla front secretaries were either killed or captured or have surrendered.

"If we cannot call that a success against the NPA, certainly we would like to call that a momentum, a lot of momentum," he said.

Police on full alert

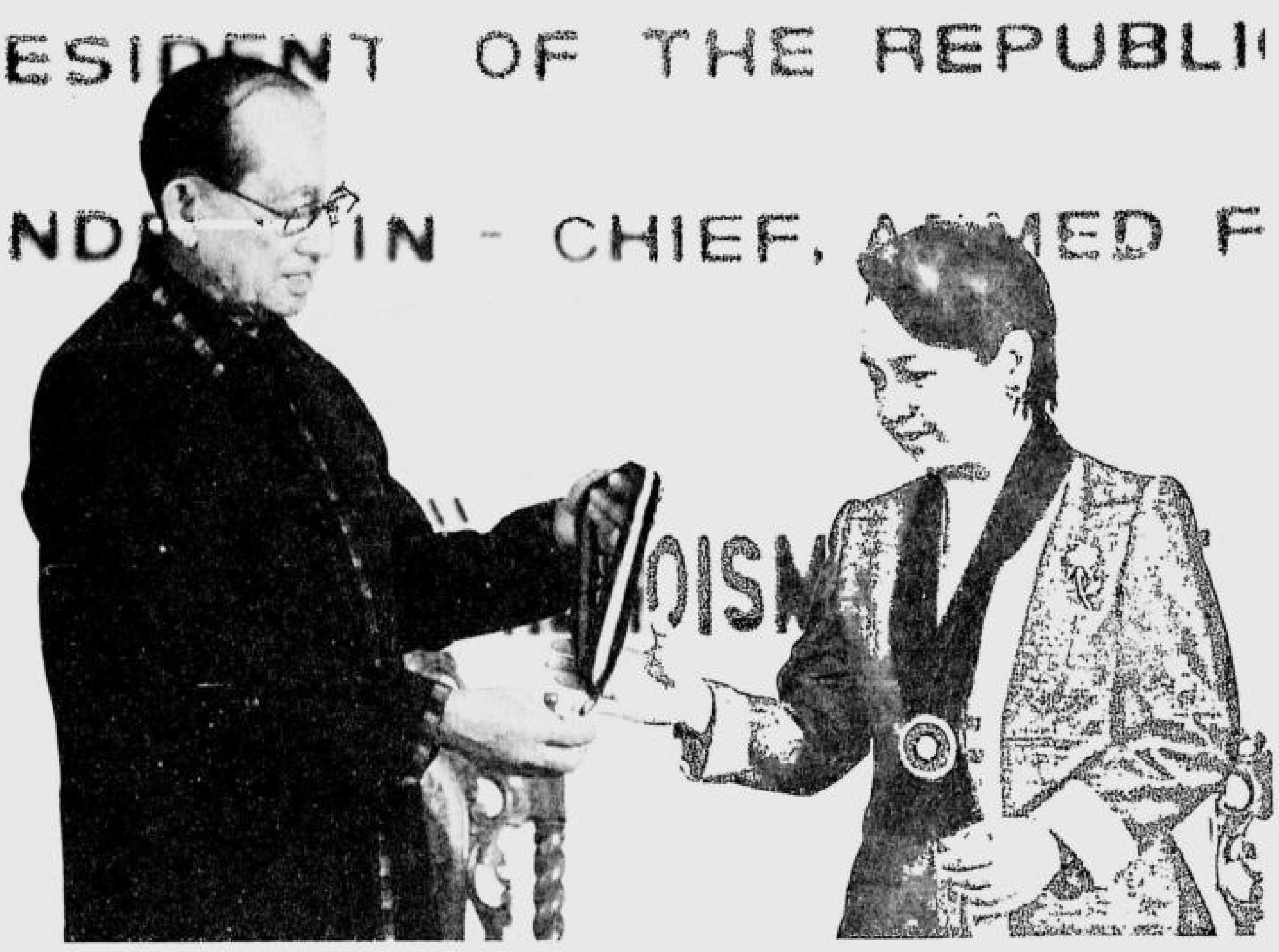
Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, yesterday said it was maintaining its "full alert" level until after the holidays.

He said the red alert had not been lowered since it was clamped earlier this month for the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) Summit in Cebu, which was postponed.

Pagdilao explained that the full alert was extended for the Church-led prayer rally in Luneta last week and would remain for the CPP founding anniversary on Dec. 26.

He said PNP Director General Oscar Calderon had reminded PNP personnel "to be vigilant, to adopt preemptive measures and avoid being the subject of NPA attacks."

A "full alert" means all policemen will have to stay at their posts at all times. All leaves are canceled. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*



FORMER President Fidel V. Ramos hands over one of the medals to President Macapagal-Arroyo for one of the soldier awardees at the AFP Officer's Club in Camp Aguinaldo during the celebration of the 71st Armed Forces of the Philippines founding anniversary.

LYN RILLON

Laoag radioman stabbed dead

From page A1

of those blamed for the killing of Marlene Esperat on March 24, 2005.

Police have yet to establish whether Acosta's killing was work-related.

Acosta was the second Aksyon Radyo broadcaster to be killed since 2004 when commentator Roger Mariano was gunned down on his way home to Dingras town.

Mariano's killers, who have been identified as hired guns, are facing murder charges in a Quezon City court.

Not premeditated

SPO2 Marvin Pascua, Batac police's chief investigator, said a blunt instrument pierced Acosta's stomach while minor wounds were found in the right elbow and chest.

"We are discounting premeditated killing because if it were, the victim should not have been able to take himself to the hospital after the stabbing. The assailant should not have carried out the killing in such manner," Pascua said.

He said the incident could have occurred near the town center of Batac because the victim managed to reach the hospital despite his wound.

Acosta had been working with Aksyon Radyo as a reporter for more than 10 years. He used to cover the police beat and the activities of the Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative (Inec) at its main office in Dingras town.

He was with the Inec press corps for a Christmas party at the Northview Hotel until 9 p.m. when the affair ended. He was a member of the press group.

No known threat

Mel Jay Agustin, Aksyon Radyo news director, said there was no known threat against Acosta during his stay with the radio station.

"He would tell me about his problems at work and at home. But he never confided that there was any threat against his life," Agustin said.

He said Acosta's personal belongings, including a recorder, radio monitor and several documents were found intact, inside his bag.

"We do not rule out the possibility that his death was work-related. But it could also be a case of petty quarrel," Agustin said.

In Cagayan, two announcers of Bombo Radyo Tuguegarao expressed fear that they might be killed anytime after receiving death threats because of their "continued exposés of abuses, corruption and killings of left-leaning militants."

NUJP statement

Rogie Sending and Mundin Manuel, hosts of "Hanay Big Time" and "Zona Libre," said motorcyle-riding men had been seen near their radio station.

Recently, they also received a note that read: "*Tigilan n'yo na kami. Bilang na araw n'yo.* (Stop harassing us. Your days are numbered.)"

In its statement, the NUJP called on the Arroyo administration to "exercise its political will by bringing the killers of journalists—gunmen and masterminds alike—to justice and end the culture of impunity which has allowed these attacks to continue."

The killing occurred two days after NUJP launched an information campaign for journalists' safety that seeks to increase risk awareness among journalists and arm them with needed information to minimize danger. *With a report from Estanislao Caldez, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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Local officials divided over people's initiative

From page A1

yesterday denied that their group was preparing a second petition for filing with the Commission on Elections to amend the 1987 Constitution through a people's initiative, as Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone said on Wednesday.

"Ulap has not taken a position on the matter, much less rushing a petition to be filed before the Comelec," Fortuna, a councilor of Mandaue City and president of the Philippine Councilors League, said in Cebu City.

Fortuna said he and Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, Ulap president, were surprised to read Evardone's remarks in the INQUIRER. He said Evardone "might just be expressing his personal view."

But on the phone yesterday with the INQUIRER, Evardone stood by his statement that Ulap was readying the second petition for approval by its board.

"I never said Ulap has decided to file a second petition. That's what we will take up, hopefully when everybody is through with all the [holiday] parties and meets next month. All I said was that we have three options available for us to change the Constitution, as stated by the President, and one of these is a second [petition for a] people's initiative. It is our responsibility to explore all our options," he said.

Aumentado could not be reached for comment yesterday. Repeated calls to his phone by INQUIRER correspondents went unanswered.

Imperative

Evardone said filing the second petition had become more of an "imperative," considering the Supreme Court ruling that junked the original petition but reaffirmed the legality of a people's initiative for Charter change.

He admitted that local government officials were divided not only on the best mode to push constitutional amendments but also on whether Charter change should be pursued in time for the midterm elections in May.

"There are some who want a second petition [for a people's initiative], while others prefer a constitutional convention," he said.

Both Evardone and Aumentado were present when a group of governors met with the President early this month to ask her to withdraw support from the constituent assembly being pushed by Speaker Jose de Venecia and her other allies in the House.

The governors told Ms Arroyo that their constituents were against the postponement of the May polls and the extension of the terms of elected officials, as stipulated in the constituent assembly planned without the participation of the Senate.

No meeting

In Cebu, Fortuna said there was no meeting planned in January to finalize the second petition, as Evardone had claimed.

He said Ulap officials had not had a chance to discuss their next position on Charter change since the Supreme Court struck down in October the petition for a people's initiative.

Fortuna said the officials were supposed to hold a meeting in Metro Manila last week to discuss the high court's ruling but that it did not push through.

He added that he did not know where Evardone got the information that Ulap was preparing to file a second petition that would use a people's initiative to amend the Charter to allow a shift to a presidential-unicameral, instead of a parliamentary, form of government.

Fortuna also said that while Evardone was a leading member of Ulap, he was not its spokesperson.

He said Albay Vice Gov. James Calisin, president of the Vice Governors' League of the Philippines, was the public information officer and spokesperson of Ulap.

Calisin himself sent a letter to the INQUIRER saying that he was the real Ulap spokesperson and that his group was "disclaiming" Evardone's statements on the supposed second petition.

"Even during the previous National Executive Board meetings, we did not hear or mention such issues," he said, adding that he made the disclaimer on Aumentado's orders.

With officers' consent

Asked to comment, Evardone said he had never claimed to be the spokesperson of Ulap.

"It is the media that labeled me a spokesperson, and I can't blame them because I have spoken in behalf of the group on numerous occasions in the past with the consent of the officers," he said.

He added that he was the public relations officer of the Philippine League of Governors.

Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous
to your health

Humane treatment of elderly urged

From page A1

sured of this," he says.

There are many humane ways to deal with the elderly, Gatchalian says, adding that a number of forums have been designed to discuss the matter and recommend how young family members may contribute to a harmonious relationship.

Family responsibility

The Christian obligation to go beyond the elderly's physical needs is a family responsibility. But it is now common practice among younger people to be less involved in the care of their parents because they have a family of their own.

This is unacceptable, Gatchalian says.

"Children are obliged to help their parents financially. They should also extend help to the caregiver, especially if he/she is a sibling. Not visiting elderly parents, especially when they are sick, is a form of abuse," he says.

To prevent misunderstanding, Gatchalian says, elderly people in their vigorous stage should write an advance directive specifying how they wish to be cared for.

He also says that while institutional care is acceptable in certain urgent cases, children should think twice about this.

Caring for mom

According to Marilou "Uditte" Cayton and Bantay Matanda founder Adele Joaquin, sending their mothers to a care institution has never crossed their mind.

Cayton's mother, Pacita, was afflicted with a heart ailment in 1999 and was found to have dementia. four years later. Her father has a heart problem, too.

She also thought her parents had saved up for the proverbial rainy day. But she was wrong, because after her parents had spent for their children's education, nothing much was left.

The pensions they are receiving can barely meet the rising cost of medicines and hospital bills.

"But I never tell them that there is not much money left and that I am experiencing difficulties. I don't want my parents to think of finances, because this might lead them to depression. My main focus is to make them feel loved even if it means no longer thinking of myself," says a tearful Cayton.

Joaquin points out that problems arise because the many facets of the relationship between the elderly and the young are seldom discussed.

"It is not sufficient to take care of old folks' physical needs," she says.

She also notes that understanding another person's sense of belonging takes time.

"In our culture, being the only girl in the family and the youngest leaves you no choice but to take care of your aging parents," Joaquin says of her circumstances.

"If the children are married, elderly parents usually stay with their daughters, not their sons. But this I count as a privilege more than a burden, for I believe that those who take care of their parents are truly blessed."

Joaquin cares for her mother who is also afflicted with dementia.

She and Cayton share a wealth of experience. Both admit to many occasions that result in misunderstanding, "but nothing as serious as permanent irreconcilable differences," says Joaquin.

Street elders

But Lito Robedillo and Zenaida Joyner say they are fine living on their own on cardboard beds near the headquarters of Barangay 883 on Havana Street in Sta. Ana, Manila.

Their children have urged them to come home, to no avail.

Joyner, 54, is a widow with two children. She says she makes P200 in three weeks, selling recyclable stuff.

Robedillo describes his life as very simple. His family lives in Fairview, Quezon City, and a 16-year-old daughter looks in on him now and then.

One asks if they ever feel neglected, and they reply with a hostile stare.

"Our condition on this pavement is our choice. No one pushed us to live like this," Robedillo and Joyner say in Filipino.

Lack of laws

"This," they say, pointing to the ample sleeping space, "is enough. We want to live as independently as we can. This is the kind of life we want. Is there something wrong with what is OK with us?"

If that is the case, says Gatchalian, it's because people lack awareness of the rights of the elderly.

"If only Congress passes a bill on national health care insurance for elders from diverse walks of life, it will be a lot easier for us to live peacefully in our old age," he says.

He concedes that the senior citizen's card is an advantage, but points out that it is "not as wide-range and as deeply enriching as understanding the complexities of caring for old people."

Gatchalian says the media can help "educate" Congress by pushing for pertinent legislation.

"The problem is, politicians have passed the buck to private citizens like us. They do not realize that the elderly need them to pass laws or spell out a comprehensive geriatric system to include national healthcare," he says, adding:

"Those who commit crimes on elders should be penalized, too."

The number of elderly in the Philippines is estimated at 6.5 million.

"Are elders left to suffer because they comprise a small voting population?" Gatchalian asks.

A series of unfortunate incidents at int'l airports

From page A1

agent, when he learned that a month-old baby was passed under an X-ray machine scanning hand luggage at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

The Los Angeles Times on Wednesday reported that a 56-year-old woman travelling to Mexico had placed her grandson into a plastic tray intended for carry-on items and slid the bin onto a conveyor belt.

Airport officials watching X-ray screens only noticed something was wrong when the baby's outline showed up on their monitors, the newspaper said.

The baby was removed immediately and taken to a hospital for a checkup. Doctors determined the infant had not received a dangerous dose of radiation.

"The lady obviously mistakenly put the baby in the machine. It was an unfortunate incident," Transportation Security Administration spokesperson Nico Melendez said.

The grandmother and her grandchild were subsequently allowed to continue their journey to Mexico City.

Security experts quoted by the Times said the incident highlighted concerns about screening procedures at LAX and other airports.

"The screeners are still reporting that they're being pushed," Sullivan said.

But an official with the Transportation Security Administration, which manages LAX screeners, said the organization did not have enough workers to monitor what was being slid under X-ray machines.

Airport officials said it was an innocent mistake by an inexperienced traveler and was only the second such incident at LAX since 1988, when a baby in a car seat went through an X-ray scanner.

Charged double

In France, a man who had sailed through tight airport screening procedures found himself locked in a courtroom battle with an airline.

The apparently overweight passenger has sued Air France after being told he was too fat and had to pay for a second seat to accommodate his bulk.

Jean-Jacques Jauffret, a French scriptwriter, told Reuters on Wednesday that he felt humiliated by Air France staff who had measured his waist in public at the New Delhi airport in 2005 and decided he was too big for a single seat.

A lawyer representing Air France told a court on Tuesday that the airline had a clear policy of asking obese passengers to pay for two seats.

"Let's be objective. This man is fat," lawyer Fernand Gamault told the court in Bobigny, according to Le Parisien newspaper. "He barely fits on the courtroom chair. How could he sit in an airplane?"

Gamault was not available for comment. But Jauffret confirmed the lawyer's comments and said he was denounced as "fat" and "enormous" on countless occasions during the hearing.

"I felt shocked and humiliated by what he said," Jauffret added.

Jauffret said he weighed more than 160 kilos (352.7 lb) and said he had flown numerous times, including on other Air France flights, without ever being asked to pay more.

Air France's website urges overweight passengers to reserve a second seat, adding that failure to do so might mean they are refused access to an aircraft if it is fully booked.

Jauffret has asked for 8,000 euros ($10,580) in damages and 500 euros reimbursement for the cost of the additional ticket. A verdict in the case is due on Feb. 20.

Lucky passenger

No such unfortunate incident befell a Taiwanese woman who took a nonstop Cathay Pacific flight from Hong Kong and arrived at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport on Wednesday.

When she landed, she was welcomed with gifts.

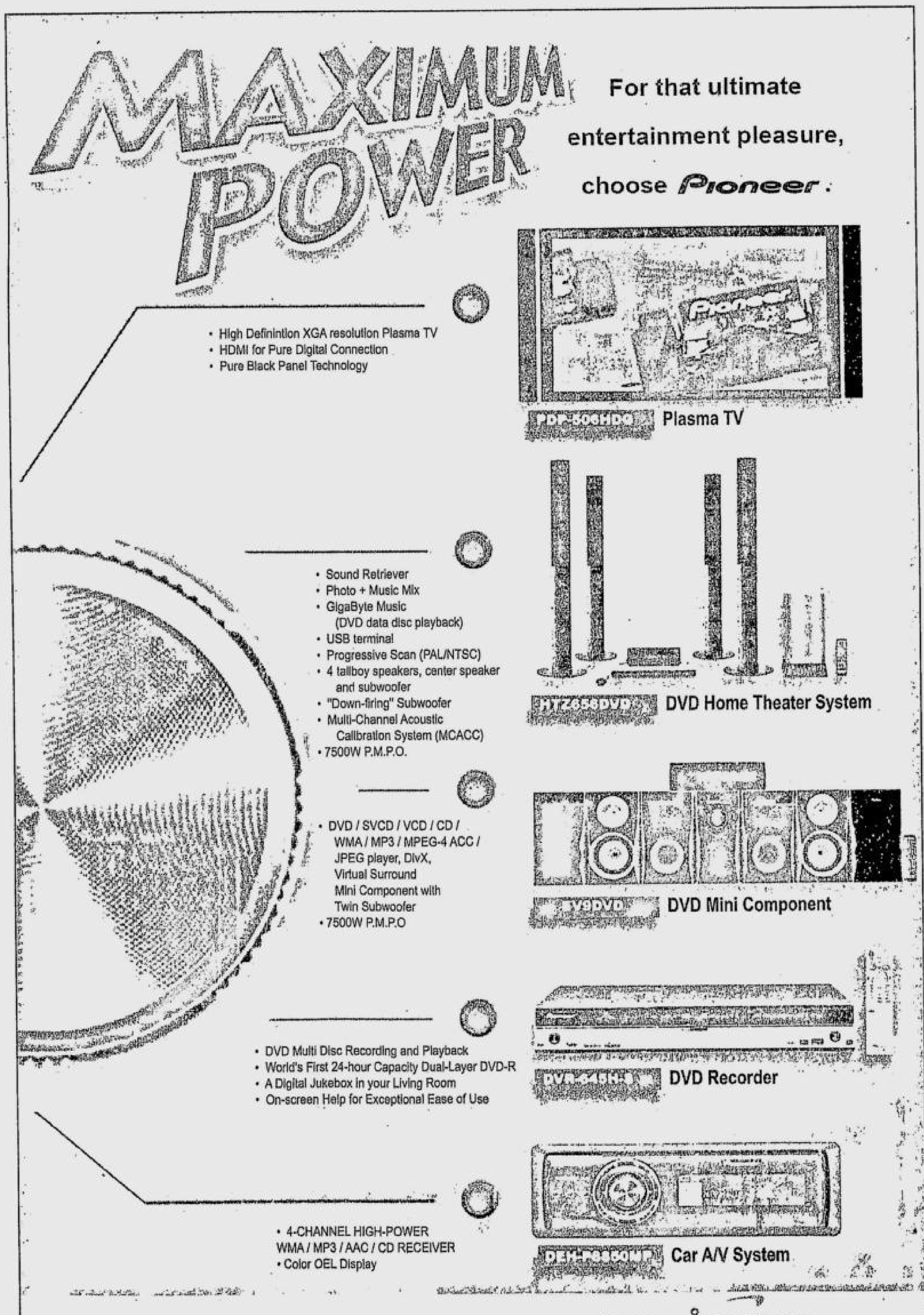
The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which runs the airports and other transit hubs in the region, said Liang Chen was the lucky 100 millionth traveler for Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark Liberty International airports.

In honor of the dizzying distinction, Chen was lavished with gifts, including airline tickets, hotel accommodations and tickets to a New York Mets game.

The three airports logged just under 100 million travelers last year. And they are on track to handle 104 million by the end of 2006, an increase of more than 28 percent in just four years.

The new statistic caps a series of recent records for the three airports. Last year's traffic set one, as did the more than 50.6 million passengers who trooped through in the first half of this year. Newark's passenger count hit a new high of 34.2 million this weekend, surpassing a record set in 2000.

The passenger records are a measure of a rebound in air traffic since the airborne terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, which spurred a sharp downturn in air travel and led to airline bankruptcies. *Reports from AFP, Reuters and AP*



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INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFICATION AND SEALED BIDDING

The Northern Samar Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NORSAMELCO) has received fund from the Department of Energy (DOF) E.R. 1-94. The proceed of allocated funding is for construction of the DX-Line under the Rural Electrification Program.

Interested parties are hereby invited to a Pre-Qualification and sealed Bidding for supply or hereunder mention project:

Project : Construction of distribution line for 35 barangays under AWP'06
Location : NORSAMELCO Coverage area
Contract : Supply & Labor of materials
Brief Description : Supply of materials used for dx-line construction of 35 Brgys and Labor for construction
Approved Total Budget For the Contract (ABC) : Php46,421,426.85

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of NEA-EC's procurement manual and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	UNITS
1	Pole Line Hardwares	1	Lot
2	Cutout & Arrester Comb., w/ Load Break, AB Chance, Org.	79	pcs.
3	Conductor wire: BRAND: Unicon, Phelp Dodge, Phillex or American Wire Cable		
	a Conductor, Bare, ACSR #2, AWG. 6/1	259,800	meters
	b Conductor, Bare, ACSR #1/0, AWG. 6/1	151,400	meters
	c Conductor, Duplex, #2, AWG. 6/1	10,650	meters
4	TRANSFORMER, double bushing w/ external tap changer BRAND NEW; met the standard tech. specs (Philec, Wagner and the like)		
	a 15 KVA	39	units
	b 25 KVA	9	units
5	Steel Pole, 8 sides, 3.5mm, Hot Dip Galvanized		
	a. 30/4ft-top dia. 100mm, bottom dia. 200mm, 2 sections	268	pcs.
	b. 35/4ft-top dia. 120mm, bottom dia. 210mm, 2 sections	1266	pcs
	c. 40/4ft-top dia. 127mm, bottom dia. 251mm, 2 sections	42	pcs.
6	Anchor Log, 9"x4'	1256	pcs.
7	Crossarm, Wood, 3- 1/2" x 4 - 1/2"x8'	727	pcs.
8	Supply of Labor	1	lot

	BAC ACTIVITIES	Schedule		
		Time	Date	Venue
1	Receipt from prospective Bidders of Letter of Intent (LOI) including Application of Eligibility		12/23/2006 3-Jan-07	NORSAMELCO Brgy. Magsaysay Bobon N. Samar
2	Issuance of Eligibility Forms		5-Jan-07	NORSAMELCO Brgy. Magsaysay
3	Receipt of Eligibility Requirements (deadline)		9-Jan-07	NORSAMELCO, Brgy. Magsaysay
4	Issuance of Bid Documents		9-Jan-07	NORSAMELCO, Brgy. Magsaysay
5	Pre-Bid Conference	10:15am	10-Jan-07	Conference Rm. NORSAMELCO
6	Documents Opening of Sealed bid	10:15am	30-Jan-07	Conference Rm. NORSAMELCO

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at the NORSAMELCO, Brgy. Magsaysay Bobon, N. Samar, upon submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Seven Thousand Pesos (PhP 7,000.00) to our PBAC Secretariat. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the same address. The PBAC will use non discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility check/ Screening as well as the preliminary examination of Bids.

Only qualified bidders who were passed during the pre-qualification screening will be allowed to participate in the bidding. Bid proposals must be accompanied by Bid security equivalent to 5% of the total bid price in an acceptable form.

NORSAMELCO hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive any minor defects or infirmities therein, and to accept such bids as may be deemed advantageous to NORSAMELCO

For further information please contact the following nos. 09173042867/09173042869/055-5009496, telefax # 055-2518163.

(Sgd.) NILO A. ESTOPA
PBAC-Chairman

(PDI--Dec 22 & 28, 2006)

600 peace advocates to tour ex-US bases

OLONGAPO CITY—SOME 600 JAPANESE and Korean peace advocates are scheduled to arrive here today (Friday, Dec. 22) for a historical and environmental tour of the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, a former American naval base.

The Alliance for Bases Clean-up (ABC), composed of two provincial organizations of military toxic victims from Clark and Subic, will spearhead the study tour that will tackle the Philippine bases movement's contribution to world peace during its successful drive to close down the bases in 1991.

"We are excited with the prospect of deepening the people-to-people exchange between Japanese, Koreans and Filipinos when the Peace and Green boat docks at the Subic Freeport Zone," Myrla Baldonado, ABC president, said.

The Peace and Green boat, carrying the foreign advocates, is expected to arrive Friday morning for whole-day activities to be held here and inside the Subic Bay Freeport zone.

As part of the tour, the foreign advocates will participate in a forum with ABC officers and members to share information on the impact of the toxic legacy of US bases on the health, environment and bases conversion, Baldonado said.

"To many, especially the former base workers of what was once the Subic Naval Base, it is interesting to hear about the Peace and Green boat coming not to make war but to promote peace," she said. *Allan Macatuno, Inquirer Central Luzon*

ERRATUM

On the full page ad of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines which appeared on page A17 of the Dec. 20th issue of the Inquirer, the word "Educational" was inadvertently written as "Education". Our sincerest apologies.

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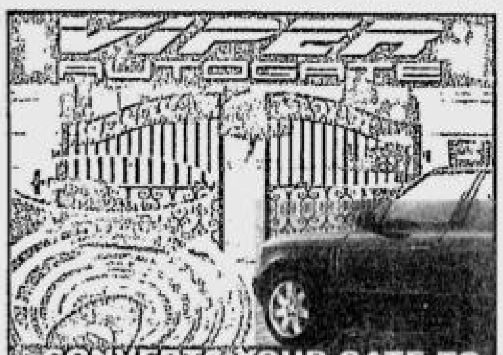

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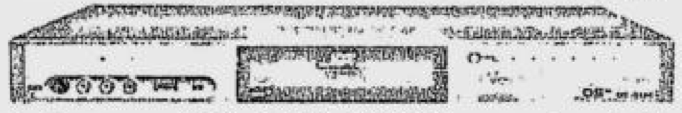

A Christmas message from the convenors of One Voice to our signatories and valued allies:

We thank you all for speaking out when the chacha train threatened to misuse democratic processes for self-serving purposes, and many were silent. We thank you for the trust and the unwavering commitment. Together, we battled in the trenches when it mattered the most. As we all look back and survey the havoc and waste that the battle left in its wake, we may wonder if it was worth the effort.

We may wonder if this is indeed a new beginning to finally get the country and the government we deserve or if this will be just another lost opportunity, another inconsequential footnote in our history. We may wonder if, after the back-slapping and merriment of the moment, and the hopeful picture of solidarity, we will again go back to our separate lives and leave the country to the political games and agendas of those who were voted to serve but have repeatedly failed the people.

We think we can all say it was worth it. But we cannot let history repeat itself for the nth time. Our country is too precious and too often betrayed to be left alone to face that fate. Let us celebrate the moment and enjoy the good cheer, and then prepare for the many more battles ahead.

Remember our 5-point program:
(1) stop the so-called people's initiative;
(2) social reform program now;
(3) electoral reform now and credible 2007 elections as an indirect referendum on the present administration
(4) a constitutional convention, not a constituent assembly, if necessary;
(5) work collectively in restoring the trustworthiness of our democratic institutions

Much has been achieved. But clearly, there is more work ahead of us, more difficult than before. But there are more of us now. The silent majority are finding their voice and are speaking out loudly for our leaders to hear – we want real change.

We will work with all groups who want real change. We will learn from one another, share our expertise and resources and take the lead on issues and concerns when that leadership is called for. Otherwise, we are all foot soldiers in the service of a nation. What is important is to broaden and deepen the national dialogue and to work together harmoniously for the good of all, but especially for those who deserve a better life than what democracy has given them.

After the holidays, after we have spent time communing with our families and friends, after we have renewed our faith in the real meaning of Christmas, and have thanked the Lord for His many blessings, let us get together, pray together and plan for the days ahead. There is work to be done.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

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Muslim . . .

From page A1

that day is the Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son Ishmael for Allah (an event that runs parallel to the biblical story of Abraham offering his beloved son Isaac to God).

Following the lunar calendar, Eid ul-Adha falls on Dec. 25-31 this year—a supposedly solemn but definitely festive week in the Christian calendar.

This explains why Basman and the rest of his community are just as merry as the Christians, as though the Christmas spirit has rubbed off on them, too.

"Don't be surprised if you see Muslims decorating their houses, putting on their best clothes, and preparing the best meals," Basman told the INQUIRER in an interview Tuesday night. "The coming week is also very important for all of us."

Parallelisms

The merging this year of the Christian and Islamic occasions highlights the curious parallelisms between the two great religions.

They are not too different, after all, as will be seen in Muslim communities beginning early on Monday, Basman said.

His house, which alternates as an office for his inter-religious advocacy work, is adorned with "Christmas" lights in white and green, which are, he said, the colors of Islam.

While Filipino Catholics hold their traditional dawn Masses *(simbang gabi)* starting on Dec. 16, Muslims who number around 10 million in the Philippines have a rough equivalent in *salatul eid*, a form of congregation worship in mosques that usually begins at around 6 a.m.

The community worship follows the regular *soboh* (or early morning prayer) which starts at around 4 a.m., according to Basman.

For *salatul eid,* Muslims put on their best clothes before converging with their families and the rest of the community in mosques. Filipino Muslims usually bring native delicacies like *dodol* (their version of the sticky *kalamay)* and variations of rice cakes like *biko, kuchinta* and *suman.*

"After the prayers, families somehow compete on who gets to share the most food with people in the vicinity of the mosque," Basman said.

"Elsewhere, it's an open house where everyone gets to taste what other households have prepared," he said.

No Scrooge

But even if Eid ul-Adha does not fall within the Christmas week, Basman said he was not one to play Scrooge to the Christians around him.

He said he had made it a habit to respond to Christmas greeting cards he would receive from well-meaning Christians. But his reply cards would contain the phrase "season's greetings," not the customary "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

FILIPINO Muslims usually share native delicacies, like these items disp prayers during the weeklong celebration of Eid ul-Adha starting Dec.

"It's my way of joining Christians in their celebration without turning my back on my faith," he said, adding that he would also exchange presents with his Catholic or Christian friends.

Basman said he was careful not to commemorate Christmas per se; doing so, he said, would create the impression that he was "singling out" or putting Jesus above the other prophets mentioned in the Koran.

Through the years, his friends have come to appreciate his gesture and, in the process, understand the oft-misunderstood Islamic faith, he said.

Party vignettes

Basman is often invited to the annual Christmas party of the papal nuncio or the ambassador of the Holy See in the Philippines.

On many occasions, he said, he had won raffle prizes of wine or ham. Knowing that his faith allows neither prize, party organizers wasted no time giving him a toy, a picture frame, or a cheese ball instead.

But not all situations involved knowledgeable party hosts.

One time in the 1970s, Basman, then a bank executive, attended his company's Christmas party.

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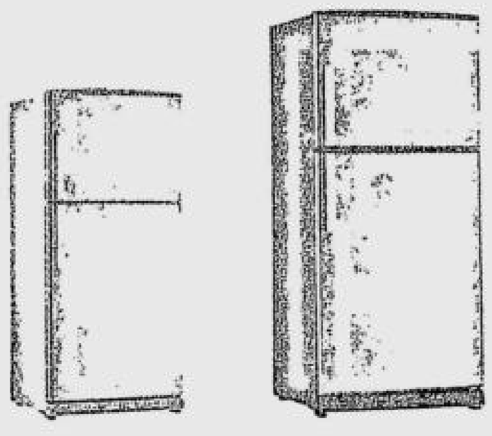

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layed on Eid'l Fitr, after the
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than the Prophet Muhammad ed religious tolerance.

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ophet's example in his own mi- he saw "nothing wrong in mak- ristians happy."

xchanging gifts or cards with ctually celebrating Jesus' being a Muslim personality," Basman

Virgin ma awaits arrival of offspring

From page A1

tilization. It has been seen in about 70 species, including snakes and lizards. Scientists are unsure whether female Komodo dragons have always had this latent ability to reproduce or if this is a new evolutionary development.

At 8 years old, Flora—whom Buley describes as "demure"—is sexually mature. Having been raised in captivity, she has never been exposed to a male Komodo dragon. She lives with her younger sister, Nessie.

Flora's keepers first became suspicious in May, when she laid 25 eggs.

Though it's not uncommon for female dragons to lay eggs without mating, such eggs are not usually fertilized. As a precaution, they were placed in an incubator. About half of Flora's eggs looked like real eggs—they were very white and had solid shells.

When three of them collapsed, scientists took a closer look.

"We saw blood vessels and a small embryo," said Buley, one of the Nature study's authors. "And we knew immediately that Flora had fertilized the eggs herself."

They then sent the collapsed eggs, along with tissue samples from Flora, Nessie, and a male Komodo dragon, to a laboratory in nearby Liverpool that conducted genetic testing to determine the eggs' parentage.

Results showed that although the baby Komodo dragons are not exact Flora clones, their DNA could not have come from any other dragon.

Back to normal mating

At the London Zoo, Sungai gave birth to four dragon hatchlings in April through self-fertilization. After their births, Sungai went on to mate normally with a male dragon, producing another baby dragon.

"Komodo dragons seem to be able to switch ways of reproducing to deal with a shortage of suitable boyfriends," said Dr. Rick Shine, a professor of evolutionary biology at the University of Sydney, Australia. Shine was not involved with the Nature paper.

In contrast, other lizard species that reproduce asexually cannot mate normally.

That might give Komodos a distinct survival edge. Only about 4,000 dragons remain in the wild, of which 1,000 are female. Concerns about dwindling Komodo dragon populations might be allayed by Flora and Sungai's recent self-induced motherhood.

"If female dragons can on occasion help out by virgin births, more power to them," said Trooper Walsh, a US-based Komodo dragon expert, who was not connected to the study.

"Komodo dragons are the ultimate survivors," said Walsh. "This is just another way this species can adapt to its surroundings."

Implications

The discovery that Komodo dragons can reproduce asexually also has major implications for how they will be bred in captivity in the future.

Every Komodo dragon in Europe is listed in a so-called "studbook," a kind of dating service for dragons.

Decisions about which Komodo dragons should be paired up are made to maximize genetic variability. Knowing now that self-fertilization is possible, scientists will have to be much more rigorous in determining dragon parentage and in their matchmaking schemes.

Experts are also keen to find out how prevalent virgin births are in the wild.

"It's baffling why a species starts doing this," said Dr. Kevin de Queiroz, a research zoologist at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History in Washington, who was not involved with the paper. "It would be helpful to know how often this happens and what the mechanism is that allows them do that."

A more detailed understanding of parthenogenesis might even accelerate research into stem cells or allow certain diseases to be modeled in the laboratory. And if scientists can provoke parthenogenesis, they might also be able to save endangered wildlife species.

Hatching anticipated

In the meantime, Buley and his colleagues at the Chester Zoo are eagerly anticipating the hatching of Flora's remaining eggs.

A Christmas arrival, according to Buley, would probably be on the early side, since the baby dragons are not technically due until January.

The timing, he says, is mere coincidence.

"We will only begin to worry if we start to see a really bright star outside the zoo on Christmas Eve," he said. AP

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From page A1

source added. Draft beer flowed and hard drinks were available in cases.

The stage groaned with raffle prizes that included motorcycles, refrigerators, TV sets, ovens, electric fans, mountain bikes and other home appliances, the source said.

Just before midnight, the party was interrupted with a video presentation on the capture of fugitive former Sen. Gregorio Honasan at the Enclave Townhomes in Quezon City last month.

As a way of introducing the video, members of MIG-21, the lead operating team in the arrest of the alleged coup leader, presented a comedy skit that starred a barely dressed man and woman, apparently referring to Honasan and his friend, Ingrid Ramos, the source said.

After the video presentation, Bangit stood up and commended the team.

"Then everybody started shouting, 'Long live the emperor!'" the source added.

A sergeant assigned to one of the Isafp units confirmed that "emperor" is their code name for Bangit, who was head of the Presidential Security Group, before he was named Isafp chief months ago.

MIG-21, the Isafp unit that handles electronic intelligence, was in the limelight last year after former National Bureau of Investigation deputy chief Samuel Ong named MIG-21 agent T/Sgt. Vidal Doble as the source of the "Hello Garci" tapes.

Doble was "grounded" by the Isafp leadership, but no charges were filed as he had apparently returned to work at MIG-21.

The INQUIRER got a confirmed report last month that Doble was among the Isafp agents who were "mobiled" for the operations that led to the arrest of Honasan.

The revelry continued past midnight with Bangit whipping out a bundle of P500 bills and throwing them to his audience, one of the sources said.

"It was fun and we tried to catch the bills. *Wala akong nakuha* (I didn't catch any)," one sergeant said with a laugh.

Bangit also crumpled some of the bills into paper balls and tossed them to the audience, the sources said.

"He was drunk, that would explain his behavior," one of the sources said.

The revelry continued with the "emperor" offering P1,000 to anyone who could drink a mug of draft beer in one swig, the source said.

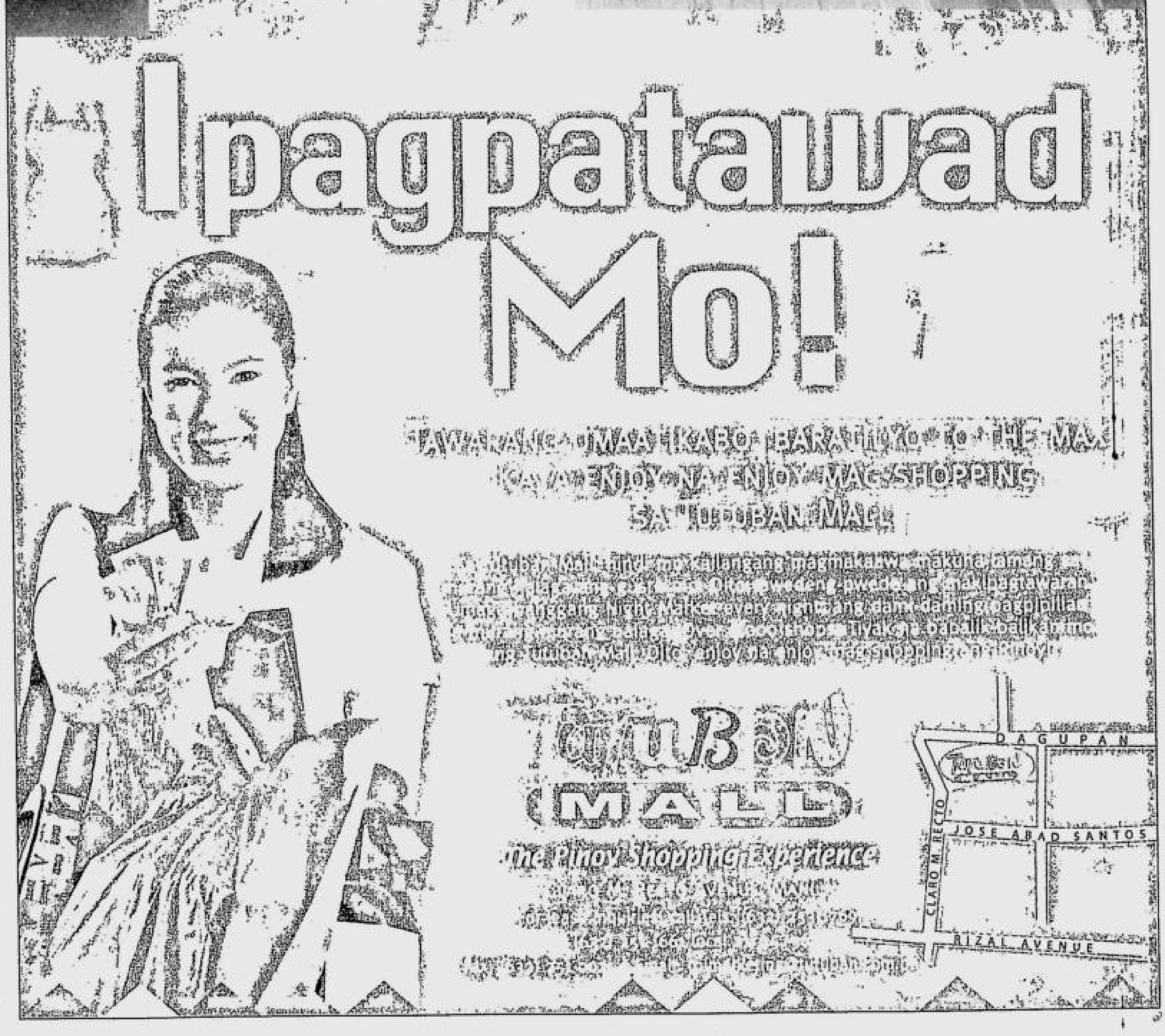
"It was like Oktoberfest," the source added.

Still having fun at the beer-drinking party, Bangit also offered P1,000 to anyone who could dance with a bottle of beer on his head—without spilling a drop.

All the money-throwing fun were done to the tune of Wowowee's (noontime TV show) "Boomtarat-tarat," the source continued.

Another source said Bangit had been throwing parties at Isafp almost every other day just this month alone.

On Tuesday, Bangit also brought the Isafp staff to a party with President Macapagal-Arroyo aboard the presidential yacht "Ang Pangulo."



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OPINION

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EDITORIAL

IN THE TUG OF WAR OVER DANIEL SMITH, WHICH has the Philippine government joining hands with the United States against our judiciary, the issues are only two: First, when can legal proceedings be said to have been completed? Was it when Smith was convicted, and sentenced, or is it when all appeals have been exhausted? Second, can someone convicted by our courts be held under US custody? Everything else, as President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives like to say, is immaterial and irrelevant. Particularly in the face of what we've pointed out to be the quite reasonable legal opinions of Judge Benjamin Pozon with regard to the Visiting Forces Agreement.

It doesn't take a legal genius to realize a trial has a beginning, and an end. And that the end of a trial comes when the defendant is asked to rise, and the presiding judge reads the verdict and hands down a sentence. At that moment, the defendant becomes a convict; if sentenced to jail, even a defendant out on bail is immediately taken into custody and imprisoned.

The law affords the convict ample opportunities to appeal the verdict. In that manner, the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court can either overturn or modify the sentence or order a retrial. But until such time as a superior court either confirms or overturns a verdict, the verdict stands.

Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith of the US Marines didn't lose a civil case. He was found guilty of a criminal act: rape. Rape is a non-bailable offense in the Philippines and a convicted rapist certainly cannot be allowed to stay out of jail, which is what is going to happen if Smith is put under the custody of the US government. Giving him that privilege would accord him a privilege that is not open to Filipino citizens.

As we've pointed out in the past, Pozon hasn't tried to read the VFA in an arbitrary or whimsical way, but rather, with the fullest appreciation for the special circumstances the agreement spells out for American servicemen convicted by our courts.

Which begs the second question: Is the US Embassy correct in insisting that Smith be held on its premises? Was the Philippine government correct in agreeing with, and trying to uphold, the American position? We think not.

Pozon interprets the VFA as saying that a convicted American must be held in a Philippine facility, but one mutually agreed upon by both the American and Philippine governments. Logic dictates such a reading. If an American facility on US soil was the intention of the agreement, then the Philippines might as well have abandoned all efforts to negotiate such an agreement. Or put another way, the Philippine government might as well have agreed that crimes committed by American servicemen be prosecuted in American courts, tried according to US law, and sentences handed out and served in the United States.

The agreement is meant to uphold the concept of accountability under our laws and according to our legal system, with punishment being a Philippine responsibility, subject to America being accorded the chance to meet its own obligations to its citizens to ensure their safety. But that is as far as American privileges are meant to extend.

To our mind, this would mean that the US government would be within its rights to insist on a level of comfort for Smith that matches federal or US military facilities an American serviceman convicted of a similar crime would get in the United States. But it doesn't mean Smith should be detained on US soil, which is what the American Embassy is.

That there is no clear agreement between our government and the Americans as to what and where such a facility might be is not the fault of the courts. Pozon has merely opted for what is equally logically the default position for any self-respecting Filipino: until such a facility has been identified, a standard Philippine jail must do.

Our government, however, has spent its time trying to be the lackey of the US Embassy instead of upholding a reasonable and dignified interpretation of the VFA. It could have constructed a special facility by now. But it seems to be more interested in fighting our own legal system than upholding it.

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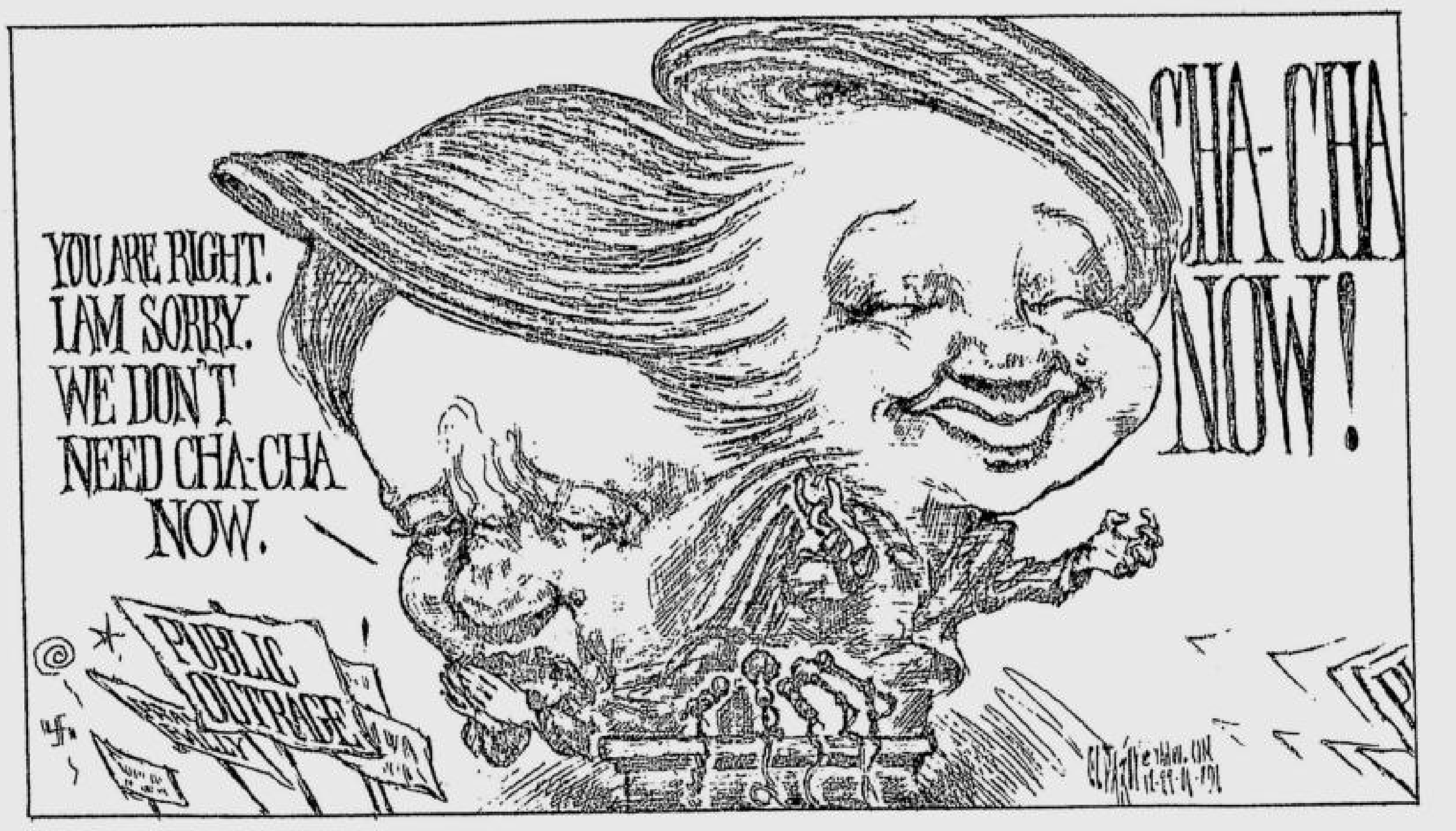

YOU ARE RIGHT. I AM SORRY. WE DON'T NEED CHA-CHA NOW.
CHA-CHA NOW!
PUBLIC OUTRAGE
RALLY

GMA lies again

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

"WE WILL PUT CHA-CHA IN THE BACK burner. We will let the people decide when to change the Constitution"—President Macapagal-Arroyo, Dec. 14, 2006.

"We cannot say we are backing off [from] … Charter change"—Malacañang, Dec. 18, 2006.

Perhaps it is too much to expect GMA to remain true to her word, considering her past record. But it took years before she somersaulted in her promise not to run for reelection, and notwithstanding her promise, she ran. It took months after her "I am sorry" speech on the Garci tapes before she somersaulted again. Now only four days separated her promise to drop Cha-cha and the statement that Cha-cha will ride again.

But what did you expect? She is getting more adept at this despicable vice. When GMA is finally booted out of the Palace where she doesn't belong, she can find a job as an acrobat.

I warned everyone about that, didn't I? I said that like Frankenstein's monster and Dracula, the Cha-cha monster would rise from the dead and surprise us all, and therefore we should not let our guard down. Still it came as a surprise that the turnaround came so soon.

Lying and doublespeak have become a plague in Malacañang since GMA moved in. It has become an addiction worse than drug addiction, smoking and alcoholism. The people there, it seems, lie because they cannot help it. It has become a habit.

Malacañang, no doubt, was emboldened by the less-than-expected turnout at last Sunday's protest rally of the Catholic Church. But the low turnout was caused by the holier-than-thou stance of the bishops who, rightly or wrongly, banned politicians from speaking or appearing on the stage and banned placards and banners. The promise of the administration to put Cha-cha "on the back burner and let the people decide," plus the warning of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to government employees against joining the rally, and the threat of National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales to label all leftists as true-blue communists were all intended to dampen the enthusiasm of the people. They worked, and now we are going to suffer the consequences of this miscalculation by the CBCP. The Cha-cha train is being readied to run again and run over all of us and steal not only our taxes but also our freedom and honor.

The bishops are right: the Cha-cha that we should have should be "character change." But administration politicians have proven time and again that they are too old and too addicted to change.

So we should all show our collective anger at this betrayal and rise again for a really mammoth protest rally that would get bigger every day until it marches to Malacañang and finally dispose of the impostor.

* * *

Instead of wasting time on Cha-cha, GMA should wake up to another growing danger in our midst: the proliferation of guns, both legal and illegal, with disastrous consequences. Last week, two neighbors in Quezon City, Eric Bayan and Jun Pajabustan, engaged in a shootout in the middle of the street, like gunfighters in the Wild West. It would have been good riddance if both of them were hit, but it was an innocent girl, Christine Ordas, only 2 years old, who was hit in the head and died. She was playing in front of her house when the two gunfighters had their deadly duel. Both fled without helping the girl.

More and more shootings like this happen in the Philippines because it is so easy to acquire guns. The Philippine National Police has rules on legally acquiring guns, but they are only on paper and rarely enforced "if the price is right." In fact, policemen encourage people to buy guns. Go to the Firearms Division of the PNP and you will see advertisements and propaganda materials pasted on the walls. The policemen themselves will help you prepare the documents for a price. Of course, these policemen get commissions from the gun stores for every gun they sell. Instead of preventing the spread of guns, policemen become sales agents for gun stores.

The PNP chief should wake up to this irregularity. The deadliest season of the year is approaching. Many Filipinos will die of gunshot wounds this coming election period to make funeral parlors happy. It is already starting.

* * *

FYI: Alan Cosio is an accomplished painter, but he is also a singer—and not just any singer, but an opera singer. He learned the opera under the tutelage of the late Dante de la Fuente.

Nestor Mata is not only a journalist and only survivor of a presidential plane crash, he is also an opera singer.

Together, Cosio, tenor and Mata, baritone, will display their singing prowess in a concert at the Dalisay Aldaba Hall, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, on Jan. 9, 2007 starting at 7 p.m.

Cosio will sing 14 arias from Giuseppe Verdi's operas. Mata will sing in the duet "Solenne in Quest'ora" from "La Forza del Destino." Enrico Caruso and Antonio Scotti's dramatic singing of this third-act aria enjoyed extraordinary popularity during the Metropolitan Opera New York performances which opened in 1918.

Jude Areopagita will be the assisting artist. Admission is free.

* * *

The Philets Foundation of the University of Sto. Tomas will hold its post-Christmas and pre-New Year party on Dec. 28, 2006, starting at 5 p.m., at the Quezon City Sports Club on E. Rodriguez Avenue. Dinner price is P300 and items for exchange gifts should not cost more than P200 each, and purely voluntary. For further information, you may call Manchu Bon at 259-5292 or +6392-7991-9318.

Unrelenting

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

MALACAÑANG'S TENACITY PROVES ONE thing. If they want it, nothing can stop them. If they don't, nothing will move them. It applies to Charter change. How many times would they have to be rebuffed, denounced and rejected before they give it up?

But it applies as well to the unrelenting executions of Bayan Muna activists. If the killings have not stopped to this day, after the sustained bloodletting in broad daylight in their homes and in front of family members, it can only be for lack of trying, for lack of political resolve by Malacañang to find any real solution to the problem.

Stated otherwise, if only the Palace had been as bullheaded in halting the activist deaths as it has been in manipulating the law to fast track Charter change, maybe now, more than half a year after the death squads began riding their motorbikes, we could have saved a few more lives and the orphaned children would be celebrating a happier Christmas with their now "disappeared" parents.

Had it not been for the recent resuscitation of the Charter change campaign, Malacañang's tepid response to the decimation of the Left may have been explained away with the old "Soft State" argument: We are a typical Third World government, big on words but weak on action. But Ms Arroyo is now the last person who can invoke it; after all, it is she who embodies the "Strong Republic" and, worse, a republic strong against its enemies but even stronger in protecting its allies and minions.

Mark Twain could very well have spoken of Charter change when he said, "Reports of my death are greatly exaggerated." Funeral dirges have been sung for the Charter change campaign, and each time it lives again, which is not exactly the good bishops' idea of the promise of the resurrection.

First, the Supreme Court shot down Plan A, the bogus people's initiative by Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), calling it a "gigantic fraud on the people." Next, the people's outrage deterred the congressmen who were hell-bent on a "House-only" constituent assembly, ignoring the Senate and bypassing the constitutional safeguard of bicameralism. I was amazed at the lengths the Palace went, moving heaven and earth (emphasis on the heaven part) to keep people away from the Dec. 17 (Sunday) prayer rally at the Luneta Grandstand, anxious as it were that a next Edsa uprising loomed around the corner.

They tried scare tactics: the Reds will infiltrate it and the ralliers would become the terrorists' targets. They tried disinformation: the rally was off-limits to politicians and celebrities. Then they physically blocked busloads of provincial ralliers at entry points to Manila.

Then the final disincentive. Why bother to rally, when your goal has been achieved? The House has already stood down, so what's the point? Indeed, haven't you heard President Arroyo herself?

Listen to the President: "Philippine democracy will always find the proper time and opportunity for Charter reform at a time when the people deem it ripe and needful, and in the manner they deem proper." Having taken the wind out of Cha-cha's sails, she concludes: "I commend the decision of the House leadership as an act of statesmanship to unify not only the two chambers of the legislature but the whole nation around the issue of Charter change."

With that, I thought the President dealt the coup de grâce on Speaker Jose de Venecia's doomed "constituent assembly," right after JDV and his cohorts backed off on Charter change at a hurriedly convened Saturday morning press conference.

But what a difference a lackadaisical Sunday prayer rally can make. Lo and behold, by Tuesday, an emboldened Ms Arroyo was humming a different tune. She noted the "three realities" about Charter change: "One, that the people accept the need for Charter change to overhaul the system; two, that there is a need for a unified national consensus on the means and timetable; and three, that this is a platform commitment of the administration that will be pursued with urgency and fervor."

The sudden about-face was, in the words of Rep. Francis Escudero, "the height of stubbornness, arrogance and treachery," although strangely, an erstwhile opposition lawyer told ANC that President Arroyo was merely being "transparent" about her plans.

The next day, as if on cue, ULAP announced that it was filing a second petition with the Commission on Elections, boasting that it can gather 4.6 million signatures in five days. That should trigger off a new "people's initiative," and it should make a January deadline to meet the mandatory 60-90 day period for the holding of a plebiscite ahead of the May 2007 elections. This option, by itself, will certainly find its way back to the Supreme Court, especially on the issue of whether there is a valid law to carry out a people's initiative—and on which the Sigaw ng Bayan decision and the subsequent action on the motion for reconsideration can give rise to conflicting views.

Already Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor has counseled his colleagues in the Cabinet to take it easy on reviving Charter change, to be attuned to the people's temper, and "not to push the President into a ravine." I hope his counsel of prudence prevails. Otherwise it's Gloria in extremis, Deo!

Nietzche said: What doesn't kill me makes me stronger. GMA gives this a slightly different twist: What doesn't oust me makes me even more brazen.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

The ghost of Pinochet

WORLD VIEW

Rodrigo Pardo

THE DEATH OF GEN. AUGUSTO PINOCHET, Chile's former military dictator, provides perhaps an appropriate end for a year that saw the Latin American Left return to glory, a revival that Hugo Chavez's overwhelming reelection in Venezuela is but the strongest sign. For unlike in the days of Pinochet, fear of the Left has mostly vanished across the continent.

Indeed, the Left has won in countries in which it has previously never held power. Despite the fact that the victories of Felipe Calderon in Mexico, Alvaro Uribe in Colombia and Alan Garcia in Peru put a stop to a supposed tsunami of Socialist victories, the trend toward the Left is unmistakable.

Chavez is no longer a lonely populist. In the Andean region, he is accompanied by two clones that are reheating his recipes: Evo Morales in Bolivia and Rafael Correa in Ecuador. In the rest of the continent, the other Left—the one deemed reliable by Wall Street and London bankers—will not join Chavez's postures, but neither will it join a crusade to unseat him.

This other Left, however, is not radical. The return to power from the political wilderness of Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua and Alan Garcia in Peru, two of the most demonized enemies of US foreign policy during the 1980s, provides sardonic testimony to this. Ortega won, thanks to an alliance with the heirs of Nicaragua's old dictator Somoza. His only ideology nowadays is Daniel Ortega. García defeated Ollanta Humala, who would have presumably joined the drift toward Chavez.

That the Latin American Right can sleep at night despite this leftward tide is not merely the result of communism's disappearance. Neither does it mean that the United States has given up its hegemonic intentions. The explanation lies in the fact that much of today's Left is not the Left as we have known it.

Instead, today's Left looks at growth, fiscal discipline and competitiveness with pragmatism, and not as ideological red flags. Its economic proposals do not define its character: it feels at ease with policies such as those followed by President Luis Inacio Lula da Silva during his first term in Brazil or those implemented by the Socialist Presidents Ricardo Lagos and Michele Bachelet in Chile. Easy applause can no longer be had by attacking big business or the International Monetary Fund.

Yet there is a frontier between today's Left and Right, and it is found in the realm of social issues: same-sex couples and marriages, religious freedom, abortion and female equality. These matters have been increasing in importance, and are inciting a clash between the political forces that have just come to power and their conservative opposition.

Foreign affairs also forms another divide. The Latin American Left does not share George W. Bush's view of the world. On global issues, it has not backed the United States in the Iraq war, it does not tolerate America's disdain for multilateralism and it is unwilling to join the antiterror crusade.

In Latin American affairs, it balks at the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and generally wants relations with the United States that allow it to promote local initiatives. Right-leaning rulers such as President Uribe in Colombia still like to speak about their special relationship with Bush or their backing of his foreign policy. President Lula and others on the Left mostly prefer to hold their tongues.

Everything suggests that the new moderate Latin American Left is more political than economic. And it is here where its biggest challenges will emerge. An excessive focus on growth and macroeconomic balances can lead to frustration among those sectors that are demanding better living conditions when they raised this new social democratic Left to power.

Education—its quality more than its coverage—was a key issue in Chile's recent presidential elections. The debate over the ability of growth alone to reduce poverty has become heated. If the new Left does not manage to answer these questions satisfactorily, it will be seen as having failed.

There is a paradox at the heart of this process: the electoral victories by the Left are a clear sign of democratic maturity. However, even though rulers are chosen through popular vote, there are worrying signs of weakness in the region's democratic institutions. Presidents are too easily reelected or returned to power (Uribe, Lula, Chavez, Ortega, Garcia), with a consequent concentration of power and limits on the emergence of new leaders.

Moreover, the military remains politically influential in Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela and Colombia. Electoral systems are precarious enough to generate pathetic situations such as that which prevailed in Mexico throughout the autumn, with its "two presidents." Parties lose ground against the caudillist adventures of people like Lopez Obrador in Mexico and Chavez in Venezuela, and congresses are assured only of public antipathy.

Across Latin America, voters voicing their economic hopes have opted for a new Left. That Left has obtained historic victories, thanks to a democracy whose survival is still not guaranteed.

So the ghost of Augusto Pinochet lingers.

Project Syndicate

Rodrigo Pardo, former foreign minister of Colombia and ambassador to Venezuela and France, is editorial director of Semana magazine.

A funding 'El Niño'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE SCENT OF SAMPAGUITA AND ROSES PERmeated the air at the courtyard of Conspiracy Bar last Tuesday, during the thanksgiving party hosted by "Task Force Subic Rape." This is an informal grouping of women and women's groups who had supported the complainant "Nicole" throughout the process of investigation and trial that culminated in the conviction of American Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith.

But while in normal times and circumstances the task force would have disbanded by now, the members now find themselves having to circle the wagons once more, as the battle for custody of Smith rages—not between the Philippine and American governments, but between Nicole's camp and Judge Benjamin Pozon on one hand, and the executive department—the DOJ, the DFA and the OSG—in collusion with the US Embassy, on the other.

Still, a milestone has at least been reached and that night, a celebration, however muted, was called for.

"Nicole," of course, was present, blending among the guests and standing tall and free, since she was among friends and did not need to crouch beneath a jacket, or conceal her face with large sunglasses and a cap. I found her, if not exactly in high spirits, then at least calm and collected. But when she took the microphone to express her thanks, her voice broke as she began to mention "everyone who was close to me." She could no longer continue, and at this, the entire party broke out in applause, in encouragement and understanding.

There was a program in Nicole's honor and to honor all who had helped the cause, consisting of poetry readings, songs, dances and a ritual, including the giving of sampaguita leis, long-stemmed roses and a shower of petals to prominent supporters.

I left early for another commitment, but the hope in everyone's heart, I am sure, is that this case will be settled soon, the better for Nicole to move on and face the future.

* * *

THROUGH the years, my work as a journalist and feminist have led me to various non-government organizations, most of them dealing with women's issues, where I have ended up as a member of the board of trustees.

Whenever I'm invited to sit on an NGO board, I usually demur by explaining that I'm embarrassed when, usually because of my daily deadline, I can't make it to meetings and activities. The person on the other end of the line usually assures me that they meet "only once every three months" and because I do believe in the causes these NGOs espouse, I end up signing on. The trouble is that, because of the many such groups I have joined, I find myself attending a board meeting or activity practically every month!

Because of the Christmas season, this has been an unusually busy time, with my presence demanded by Christmas parties and yearend board meetings. By some fluke, which I hope has nothing to do with my presence in them, most of the NGOs I'm involved with are facing one sort of financial crisis or another.

The drying up of funds available to local NGOs has been ongoing for the last decade or so. International foundations and multilateral organizations have been systematically cutting back on their grants and allocations to NGOs, or shifting focus to another part of the globe or another area of concern. Perhaps you can call it a global funding El Niño.

* * *

BUT the silver lining to this gloomy scenario is that the "NGO spirit" lives on. At least two NGOs where I am involved in report a funding shortfall and that means its paid staff will continue to receive salaries only until the end of the year or the first quarter of 2007.

In one NGO, the staff met recently and all agreed to halve their salaries starting March, and then work as volunteers afterwards if the "worst case scenario"—meaning, the money expected from a European foundation doesn't come—happens. And though they will be subsisting on allowances, they were dismayed to hear from a consulting lawyer that they would still have to pay taxes on their non-income!

When some of us board members of another NGO raised concerns about its bleak financial future, at least for the short-term, our president assured us that the group had faced tougher times before, with staff staying on as unpaid volunteers until some money came in.

"Only in an NGO would I hear this news and face smiling faces," I told a staff recently. The remarkable thing is that NGO salaries are not all that attractive or competitive to begin with. But the uncertainty of one's employment certainly compounds the challenges inherent in this line of work.

* * *

SOME commentators have engaged in "NGO-bashing" of late, indiscriminately tarring with the same brush all NGOs regardless of the issues they seek to address, the services they provide, or the means they employ.

But the NGOs I've been involved with provide real services, which include advocacy on a wide range of issues that aren't so "saleable" or are too complex for easy public acceptance.

The Women's Crisis Center provides temporary shelter, medical and psychological counseling and referral to women and children survivors of violence. WomenLead provides feminist legal consultation on an individual or institutional basis, while conducting research and advocacy on feminist issues, especially reproductive rights. The Remedios AIDS Foundation runs a clinic for people living with HIV and engages in public education and advocacy programs. Friendly-Care Foundation has set up a network of family health care clinics with emphasis on reproductive health.

And, of course, I have been involved for decades with the women's group Pilipina, which promotes wider participation of women in politics and public power, as well as with Abanse! Pinay, the women's party-list group.

To all of them I say: *Mabuhay*!

Rizal's last Christmas

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

EYEBROWS AND TEMPERS RISE WHEN I THINK aloud and ask whether we should move Rizal Day from Dec. 30, the anniversary of Jose Rizal's death, to June 19, the anniversary of his birth. While it is traditional, and proper, to celebrate the national hero's martyrdom, there is a more practical reason for a change: Each year, Rizal Day passes by almost unnoticed because the official ceremonial wreath-laying in Rizal Park takes less than half an hour, and, even if it is aired live on TV, radio or the Internet, almost everyone is asleep at 7 a.m., enjoying the holiday and the cold December weather. Since Rizal Day is caught in-between Christmas and the New Year, the commemoration is misplaced in the scheme of things.

One would think that moving Rizal Day to June 19 would provide a logical excuse for reflections on nationhood by having a week-long celebration that begins on June 12, Independence Day, and ends on June 19, Rizal Day. Unfortunately, people are so comfortable with the present set-up to even consider change. (The same can be said about changing the academic calendar.)

Since at present we have confused rules for observance of working and non-working holidays, we must give this serious thought. Perhaps Malacañang can fix and declare all our holidays a year in advance so people and industry can plan ahead.

Christmas columns are the most difficult to compose simply because you have said almost everything before and don't want to repeat or rehash, just as we do with leftovers from Christmas parties and unwanted Christmas gifts.

I never thought about it till yesterday, but in 1896 Rizal was so busy with his trial for treason that he did not send out any Christmas cards or Christmas letters to friends or family. All we have is a surly letter to his lawyer, Luis Taviel de Andrade, who was obviously too busy to see him and discuss some fine points of his case. The letter was written from his cell in Fort Santiago on Christmas Day and reads in part:

"I have been waiting for you this morning to speak with you about an important matter, but undoubtedly your pursuits did not permit you to come. If you have time to spare, I should like to speak with you before I appear before the Council. I would appreciate it very much, this afternoon, this evening or morning.

"Wishing you Merry Christmas, I reiterate I am as ever your attentive, affectionate servant and client who kisses your hand."

Since Rizal was already prepared for a death sentence, his last Christmas must have been very miserable indeed. We have no record of his noche buena meal in his cell. Before the death penalty law was signed away by President Macapagal-Arroyo this year, we would hear about the convicts being given a feast of a last meal, or at least being asked what food they would want before execution (but I doubt if they would have a hearty appetite at that point). In Rizal's case, the jailers were more pragmatic. He was only given a couple of hard-boiled eggs that he did not eat. And, if we are to believe one source, it is said that when he was fetched from his cell to begin the long, slow march to Bagumbayan, he took or threw (depending on the source you are reading) the eggs to a dark corner of the cell. When the guards asked why he did this, Rizal was quoted as saying, "It's for the rats. Let them have a fiesta, too."

This is supposed to be a Christmas column, but it is heading toward gloom. To get back into the Christmas mood, I recalled all the work to deck the house with Christmas décor a week ago. Since our Christmas tree burned last year, nearly causing a fire as tragic as the one that claimed Joe de Venecia's daughter, we have transformed a live tree, actually a plant, into a Christmas tree by placing it in the center of the living room, hanging Christmas balls on its poor branches, and placing all the gifts under it. Of course, what Christmas décor is complete without the red and green poinsettia, that some friends mispronounce as *punetas*?

If Rizal were not in jail awaiting judgment and execution, he probably would have helped put up the Christmas décor in their Binondo home, where the Rizal family had settled after being evicted from Calamba.

In a letter to his sister Maria, the first he wrote in Germany in February 1886, he advised her on interior decoration back home based on what he saw abroad: "Speaking about the dining room, for example, in Europe it is the general feeling that it must be gay, attractive and pleasant." He described the paintings and other ornaments hanging on the wall like colorful porcelain plates and the traditional Chianti bottles whose lower part was wrapped in straw. He even sketched these and gave detailed instructions on how to hang a plate on a wall with wire. He noted the types of pictures that adorn the European dining room and said, "Our dining hall [in Calamba], that is, the landing or antehall, could be decorated with parasitic plants and plates, for we have neither landscape paintings nor big pictures. White plates are not used for decoration because they are confused with the wall."

F. Sionil Jose asked me recently what Rizal would have been had he survived Bagumbayan. Based on the above, he would still be a doctor with a passion for the arts and interior design.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Painkillers

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

LAST MONTH, I GOT A TEXT FROM A PHYSICIAN FRIEND who had to rush home to Cagayan because his mother was suffering from gastro-intestinal bleeding. I responded by asking, "Is she taking NSAIDs?" He texted back, "Yes," and named the medicine, a very popular painkiller.

NSAIDs are analgesics or pain-killers. They are a boon, no doubt, helping us to bear the many aches and pains of life: headaches, toothaches, muscle pains, dysmenorrhea, arthritic pains. Many of these analgesics are also antipyretics, which means they bring down fever. They're heavily advertised and are available everywhere, even in *sari-sari* stores and office canteens, so people tend to think they're very safe drugs, so much so that some people, especially the elderly, take them every day.

On Tuesday, the US Food and Drug Administration announced that it would require stricter warnings on the packaging of these medicines, as reports of adverse reactions, even deaths, mount around the use of these medicines. The United States actually lags behind other developed countries, notably Britain, in requiring warnings on packaging of painkillers, but better late than never. I'm hoping our Bureau of Food and Drugs takes action as well soon.

The holidays will probably mean an increase in the use of these medicines so I thought I should give more details on the risks of these medicines, and the precautions we can take.

NSAIDS

The first group of analgesics the FDA seems to be most concerned about right now is known as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) which includes aspirin (acetylsalicyclic acid, ASA), ibuprofen, naproxen, ketoprofen and mefenamic acid. All these are the generic names, the ones that appear on the label in a box. There are many different brand names from St. Joseph's Aspirin to Advil and Ponstan.

These drugs can be very useful; in fact, low-dose aspirin is prescribed now as a daily medication to reduce the risks of strokes. But these drugs can cause gastrointestinal bleeding, with the risks much higher in people over the age of 60, people with a history of ulcers or stomach bleeding, and those who are taking blood thinners or steroid medicines.

Even if you don't have those risk factors, you should avoid taking these medicines on an empty stomach. Some of you may have experienced some gastrointestinal distress, and probably didn't know it came from the medicine.

Consider yourself lucky that it was just a stomach upset. People can't tell if they're already suffering from gastrointestinal bleeding until it becomes quite serious. In some cases, the bleeding can be so serious that surgery is needed. Note that gastrointestinal bleeding can cause deaths, with one US study projecting that for every 100,000 users of NSAIDs, there will be about 15 deaths from gastrointestinal bleeding.

Another problem with NSAIDs is that some people have an allergy to these medicines. If you've taken one of these medicines and suffered rashes and difficult breathing, then you should avoid any related drug. It's one family of medicines, so if you are allergic to, say, aspirin, you're likely to react as well to ibuprofen.

Paracetamol

Some years back, the medical profession agreed to ban the use of aspirin in children because of increased risk from a serious problem called Reye's syndrome. After the scare over Reye's syndrome, people shifted to another analgesic called paracetamol, which is sold under dozens of different brand names. Locally, some of the more popular brand names include Biogesic, Tylenol, Tempra.

But paracetamol has its risks, too. A large overdose of paracetamol can cause acute liver failure. The risks are increased if taken together with alcohol, which further stresses the liver. Paracetamol can even cause death, and has been used deliberately to attempt suicide. The number of accidental as well as suicidal paracetamol poisoning became such a problem that in 1998, Britain began to regulate the sale of paracetamol, limiting it to small packets of 16 tablets each.

The US FDA won't be following the British lead on small packets, but they want paracetamol packages to carry prominent warnings about the risk of liver failure. The packaging would also warn against combining paracetamol with three or more alcoholic drinks.

General precautions

Holiday headaches are going to shoot up this weekend. Whether from shopping or from bingeing on alcohol, do take extra precautions with these analgesics. Here are some general precautions you can take:

Look for the generic names of your medicines. We're fortunate that in the Philippines, drug manufacturers are required to put the generic names in a box above the brand name. If your *balikbayan* relative hands you some medicine, look at the tiny print for the ingredients. Keep in mind, too, that in the States paracetamol is listed under another name: acetaminophen.

Once you know what the ingredients are, you can take the needed precautions. With NSAIDs, it's avoiding the medicines if you're at risk for bleeding, or if you've suffered an allergy reaction to one of the NSAIDs in the past. Even if you're not an elderly patient or someone with ulcers, make sure you take the medicines with food.

For paracetamol, the general warning is not to take more than 1 gram of paracetamol at the same time (that's usually two tablets of 500 mg each). In one day, the recommended maximum dose is 4 grams.

Do not mix either paracetamol or NSAIDs with alcoholic drinks.

If you're taking several medicines, make sure you don't end up overdosing because of a duplication of active ingredients. For example, Biogesic will give you 500 mg of paracetamol, but if you take Alaxan as well, you're going to get another dose of paracetamol, together with the NSAID ibuprofen. Or if you take Biogesic plus an anti-cold remedy like Neozep or Decolgen, you'll again get two doses of paracetamol.

Are there alternatives to NSAIDs and paracetamol? There's a newer group of drugs called the COX-2 inhibitors for arthritis, but these drugs also made the news a few months ago with their own set of serious side effects.

There's just too much misuse of painkillers going on. Many consumer guides on medicines now recommend using the lowest doses possible. Ask yourself, do you really need 500 mg of mefenamic acid, or can you manage on 250 mg?

I worry, too, when the analgesics are used to substitute for treatment of the cause of the pain. The poor are especially more likely to do this, avoiding the dentist, for example, to treat a dental problem that might end up a serious infection.

Sometimes, the more dramatic painkillers go through the community grapevine, endorsed as the latest "cure." One horrifying example I found recently in one urban community was the use of mefenamic acid with coconut water—to treat gonorrhea. The coconut water probably promoted urination, while the mefenamic acid eased some of the pain, but cures they are not.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Real bullies are exposed

WAS IT NOT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-Arroyo herself who said "I am tired of chasing the bully around the school yard" in referring to the activists who were protesting against the massive fraud and corruption in government, economic injustice, extrajudicial killings and curtailment of civil liberties under the Arroyo regime?

Well, Filipinos can now say, "We are tired of the bully in Malacañang, the bullies and opportunists in the House of Representatives, (In)justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and all her supporters."

The crooked lawmakers had no qualms about railroading a resolution calling for Congress to convene as a constituent assembly. They violated democracy by distorting the principle of the rule of the majority. But certainly, by so doing, they have lost the respect of the people. They showed they do not have dignity. They have no right to represent the people. All they care about is to defend or blindly obey a President widely perceived to be a fake one. They defended her electoral victory which was marred with fraud and corruption. Now they want to stay in power along with GMA, because they want to acquire more power and to keep on enriching themselves out of people's misery and suffering.

The members of Congress who played the "numbers game" are nothing but a gang of opportunists whose behavior and moral values are not only questionable but a testimony of a decadent elite leadership. They bully the people. They cheat the people. They swindle the people. Now they are trying to dupe the people into believing that they have abandoned Charter change by archiving Con-ass. But in the meantime they are pursuing Charter change through an alternative route: a constitutional convention. They are dead set on Charter change, the only way by which GMA will be able to maintain herself in power beyond 2010.

The shift to a parliamentary form of government will not resolve the political and economic crises our country is currently facing. Charter change will not alleviate the suffering of the people, will not ensure a genuine agrarian reform, will not give the workers a just and living wage, will not provide social services to the people and will not guarantee peace and order. But Charter change will surely serve the interests of the ruling elite and their representatives in the government.

While we do not believe that our present Constitution is perfect, we also do not believe that it can be made perfect under the current (mis)leadership which is obsessed with perpetuating everybody in its circle in power. The people should take note and remember the members of Congress who sold out the public interest for 30 pieces of silver.

—NORMA P. DOLLAGA,
general secretary,
Kasimbayan, 3/F NCCP,
879 Edsa, Quezon City

Gonzales' 'Red' label for party-list representatives

I'D LIKE TO COMMENT ON THE suggestion of National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales to tag House leftists with the "Red" label. Gonzales obviously made the suggestion based on what he claimed as threats of the communists to take over the government.

Gonzales should know that basic to the citizens' right to due process is the "presumption of innocence." If, indeed, there is evidence that warrants the prosecution of these persons in a competent court, why doesn't he or the government initiate the process? Isn't it more dangerous if the authority to label anybody as a communist were given to Gonzales or to the government's law enforcement or security agencies (the police and military) instead of the court?

How could an officer of the government's security council, the police and the military hand down a fair and impartial judgment on persons whom they've long considered "enemies of the state" and against whom they have a deep bias? What protection could be assured for citizens given that label?

The government has a long history of labeling individuals or groups critical of it as communists. Even prestigious church organizations and media groups have not escaped such labeling, even though such an allegation has yet to be proved in a court of law.

Isn't Gonzales, with this suggestion, actually threatening to deprive citizens of their rights, or for that matter to kill democracy? Every individual has the constitutional right to run for public office or to represent his or her sector. But does Gonzales' proposal uphold and respect this right?

Gonzales would like to hang a Damocles' sword not only over the heads of the Left-leaning party-list representatives or groups but also over the heads of the people who elected them to represent their sectors in the legislative body. Whether or not these individuals or groups are threats to our democracy, our democratic principle of "due process" must still be applied.

—DANILO REYES,
danilo@ahrchk.net

Whatever happened to sub judice rule?

THIS IS WITH REFERENCE TO NEAL CRUZ'S Dec. 6 column (wherein he quoted lawyer Harry L. Roque, director of the Institute of International Studies of the UP Law Center) and Conrado Banal III's Dec. 7 column pertaining to the pending motion for reconsideration in a mining case involving Apex Mining Co. et al. and the Southeast Mindanao Gold Mining Corp. (SMGMC) The case was decided on June 23, 2006.

The remarks of Roque and Banal are precisely the arguments advocated by SMGMC, the respondent in the case. The issues they raised have been presented and articulated by the company in its pleadings filed with the Court.

In the June 23 decision, the Court, among others, upheld President Macapagal-Arroyo's Proclamation No. 297 dated Nov. 25, 2002, proclaiming the disputed area a "mineral reservation" and "environmentally cultural area."

Hence, the Office of the Solicitor General whose stand in the case was upheld by the Court, also opposed SMGMC's motion for reconsideration of the decision, which is substantially more in favor of the government than of the Balite Communal Portal Mining Corp. and Apex Mining. The Balite Communal Portal Mining Cooperative and Apex Mining will not comment on the issues discussed in the columns of Cruz and Banal out of respect for the Supreme Court. We believe that a case that is sub judice should not be espoused in a forum other than the Court.

—RODOLFO C. RAPISTA,
counsel for Balite Communal
Portal Mining Cooperative,
Tagum City, Davao del Norte

Embarrassing decision

THE DECISION OF THE NATIONAL ORGAnizing Committee, headed by Marciano Paynor, to postpone the Asean Summit to mid-January 2007 due to Typhoon Seniang baffled not only the Filipinos but also the participating foreigners. I can't help but agree with the militants who said that "only the stupid would believe" that it was the storm that prompted the summit's postponement. It was the brewing political and "terror" storm that led the officials to reschedule the summit to next year.

It was bright and sunny here in Cebu on the day the Asean Summit was supposed to open, and there were no signs of any weather disruption whatsoever in the days that followed. Weather broadcasters even noted that on the evening the delegates were supposed to arrive, the typhoon was leaving the country's area of responsibility and they had advised the summit's organizing committee to push through with the original plan.

What does this say? Our nation has just squandered a great opportunity. It tarnished our image here and abroad. It was an embarrassment.

A local government executive remarked the decision "was a sign of a weak governance." A Japanese trade minister in his blog said the decision was "extremely puzzling."

Hope we'll do better in January 2007.

—GUS DIAMANTE JR.,
czar13th@yahoo.com

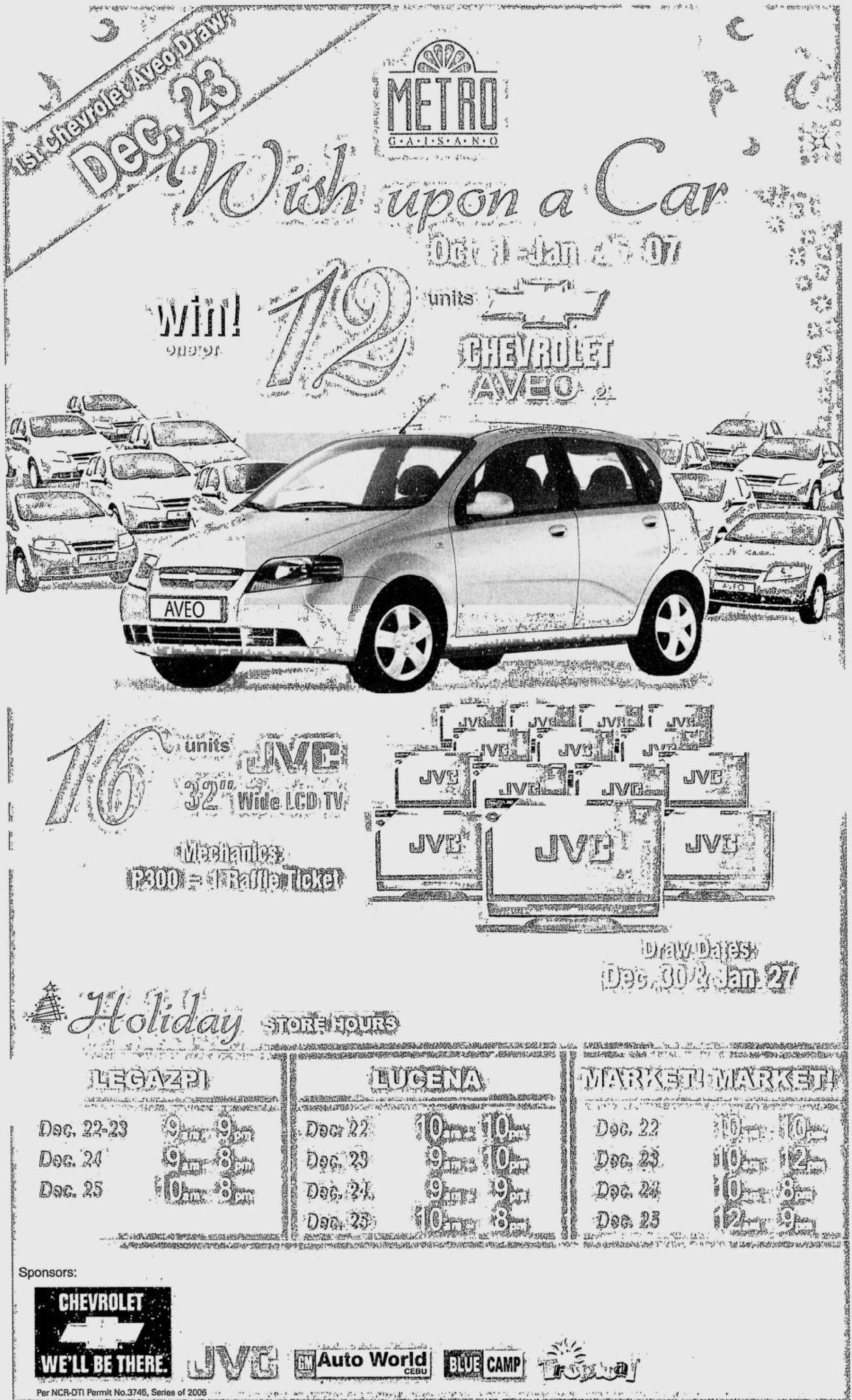
Precious and noble

FR. JAMES REUTER, HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC Church's National Office of the Mass Media, decried Judge Benjamin Pozon's decision, saying the latter disregarded the evidence that would have proven Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith's innocence. Reuter said, he didn't think Smith was guilty; the judge took every word of the prosecution as if it were gospel truth, but it did not give a bit of credence to the words of the defense. Reuter added that he remained convinced that Smith did not rape Nicole, that what the two had was a consensual sexual act.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz said, women should be taught that womanhood is precious and noble, so it is not right for them to be flaunting it around. Cruz added, they should not make themselves appear cheap and practically inciting to be violated by men. (PDI, 12/6/06)

The two top-ranked Catholic leaders are right. This national and international imbroglio could have been avoided had this Zamboanga lass stuck to the traditional "Filipina Maria Clara" image of refined womanhood by not bar-hopping with US servicemen without a chaperone. Being a matured 23-year-old college graduate, she should have used her "coconut" by going home with her sister-companion who went ahead.

—ELIGIO M. PASTORIN,
Rositaville Subdivision,
Concepcion I, Marikina City



Open Invitation: Join ANG KAPATIRAN PARTY

A responsible and accountable political party, the Alliance for the Common Good, or **Ang Kapatiran** for short, believes in "first things first" - that **principles and platform must come before candidates. Accredited by the Commission on Elections on May 8, 2004, Ang Kapatiran** hereby publicly presents its founding principles and platform. In this way the people can know what **Ang Kapatiran** stands for and what it opposes. **Ang Kapatiran** is searching for servant-leaders who are willing to run in the coming national and local elections, apply the principles and, once elected, implement the platform. **For the platform to become a reality, all its candidates must win the elections. Join Ang Kapatiran and make a difference. Help bear the cost of change.** You may reach us at No. 54 Katipunan Avenue, White Plains, Quezon City, or by phone: 819-1624, 633-0557, 635-2796, 726-5707, 911-8793, 931-2798; or by cell phone: 0918-938-3140, 0917-984-3369, 0917-882-6700, 0917-815-0355, 0927-344-1523, 0921-3001455, 0916-5151029, 0918-9056569; or by email at angkapatiranparty@yahoo.com. Please visit our website: www.angkapatiran.org

ARTICLE II: Declaration of Principles:

Sections-

1. **Belief in Almighty God.**
2. **Life and Dignity of the Human Person.** We believe that every human life is sacred from conception to natural death, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether or not it enhances the life and dignity of the human person.
3. **Family, Community and Participation.** The human person is not only sacred but inherently social. The God-given institutions of marriage and family are central and serve as the foundations for social life. They must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. Beyond the family, every person has a right to participate in the wider society and a corresponding duty to work for the common good and the well-being of all.
4. **Rights and Responsibilities.** Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things that allow him/her to have a decent life --faith and family, food and shelter, health care and housing, education and employment. In society as a whole, those who exercise authority have a duty to respect fundamental rights of all persons. Likewise, all citizens have a duty to respect human rights and to fulfill their responsibilities to themselves, their families, to each other and to larger society.
5. **Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable.** The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation. Our Christian faith calls on all of us to embrace the preferential option of the poor and vulnerable, to embody it in our lives, and to work to have it shape public policies and priorities.
6. **Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers.** The economy must serve people, not vice versa. Work is a form of continuing participation in God's act of creation. Work is a way of fulfilling part of our human potential given to us by God. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers, owners, and managers must be respected.
7. **Solidarity.** Because of the interdependence of all members of the human family around the globe, we have a moral responsibility to commit ourselves to the common good at all levels: in local communities, in our nation, and in the community of nations. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be.
8. Care for God's Creation. The world that God created has been entrusted to us, yet our use of it must be directed by God's plan for creation, not simply by our own benefit.
9. **Peace and Active Nonviolence.** The road to total liberation is not the way of violence, class struggle or hate; it is the way of love, brotherhood and peaceful solidarity. To remove social ills, active nonviolence is our moral countersign to the ideologies of today that espouse armed violence to change the *status quo*. It is likewise our countersign to the ideologies that institutionalize violence in order to preserve the status quo.

POLITICAL PLATFORM

Spiritual Dimension

1. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

Moral Dimension

2. Build a nation of character and promote the integral development of all Filipinos through character building, consistent ethic of life, good citizenship, basic political education, and values formation.
3. Dismantle the social structures that glorify sex and pornography, dishonesty, vice, moral relativism, materialism and hedonism, and replace them with structures of virtue, peace, responsibility and achievement.
4. Abolish all forms of gambling whether run by the government or the private sector.
5. Abolish the death penalty.
6. End the use of torture to extract confession.
7. End violence in school fraternities and other institutions as well as in sports whose main purpose is to inflict physical harm or violence on the opponent.
8. Actively promote responsible parenthood and natural family planning.
9. Reorient mass media towards fostering values that contribute to the formation of national commitment that is maka-Diyos, maka-bayan, maka-tao, at maka-likasan.

Social Dimension
(Multidimensional approach to peace and order):

10. Promote the culture of life, peace, active nonviolence, and progressive disarmament as a precondition to a consistent ethic of life.
11. Declare as contrary to public policy, public morals, public interest, good customs, and the common good, the glorification of gun, the culture of death and violence in the movies, television, video gram, radio, print media, billboards, posters, pro-gun stickers, gun exhibits and sale thereof in public places.
12. Make it a criminal offense for anyone but police officers or soldiers, a licensed private security in uniform and on duty, to carry firearms or any other deadly weapons in public places.
13. Increase the penalty for illegal possession of firearms or violation of any firearms law to reclusion temporal (12 to 20 years without parole or pardon). Permanent disqualification from public office shall also be imposed if the violator is a public official.
14. The windows of motor vehicles should be of such transparency that it does not obscure the view of the interior of the motor vehicle. This requirement makes sense in light of the Supreme Court's ruling that the vehicle should not be searched nor its occupants subjected to bodily search.
15. Ban the exhibit and/or sale of firearms and bullets in public malls and other public places. With prior permit and payment of rental fee, however, such exhibits and sale of firearms may be made in military or police camps.
16. Ban the manufacture, importation or sale of toy guns, air guns or replica of guns.
17. Ban the exportation of firearms.
18. Ban the importation of guns except high-powered guns for use by the police and the military.
19. Legalize and place under tight government control the local production and sale of firearms for use by the police and the military as well as the civilians for sports and home protection. Manufacture and sale of firearms without authorization of the government shall be punishable with the same penalty for illegal possession of firearms as provided in No. 13 above.
20. In addition to the present requirements for permit to possess, the applicant must show to the authorities that he/she has a gun safety deposit box at home approved by the government.
21. Mandate the periodic public inventory, decommissioning and melting down of all confiscated guns for conversion into useful instruments.
22. Under a general amnesty, an individual may voluntarily surrender an unlicensed firearm with no questions asked and without incurring any criminal or civil liability. As an incentive, the government or the private sector may give financial reward to those who take advantage of the amnesty. No other form of amnesty shall be allowed.
23. The same penalty for illegal possession of firearms shall be imposed on anyone found guilty of "planting evidence" to implicate others.
24. Actively promote a "drug-free" Philippines by formulating and implementing a no-nonsense national strategy to eliminate the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, transhipment, sale and use of illegal drugs.

Foreign Policy (Good Governance)

25. Fulfill Isaiah's prophecy: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not raise sword against another nation, neither shall they train for war again" (gunless society); to be a nation that is a friend to all and an enemy to none; pursue peace, based on love, justice, reconciliation, active nonviolence and progressive disarmament for all nations.

Social Dimension (Good Governance)

26. Abolish the 'pork barrel" system in any form and regardless of its name.
27. Accord the highest priority to projects and programs for the underprivileged, the indigenous people, the homeless, the elderly, the prisoners, the disabled, the veterans and the youth, and support non-government organizations or communities whose programs and projects directly benefit the poor.
28. Make representation before the Supreme Court to bring about the speedy administration of justice.
29. Ensuring transparency and public accountability in government activities and transactions; reinforcing vigilance against graft and corruption, abuse of authority, and waste in all three branches of the government and at all levels of bureaucracy, ensuring that public officials must live within their means and shun profligacy.
30. Enforce by administrative/criminal action failure by public officials to liquidate their cash advances within a reasonable period of time as may be prescribed by law or regulation.
31. Undertake a thorough review of the systems and procedures and guidelines on the procurement in all government institutions aimed at forestalling the commission of graft and corruption.
32. Promote a safe, clean, healthy and wholesome environment, particularly zero waste management, promote stewardship as a way of life and promote the development of parks throughout the country.

Social Dimension (Economic Development)

33. Ensure rapid and sustained economic growth for durable poverty reduction and better quality of life for all by:
    - reviewing and rationalizing all outstanding debts and limiting future borrowings within our capacity to pay based on export earnings and remittances;
    - raising national saving rate to increase the investment rate and longer term economic growth:
    - enhancing investments in human resource development, especially by strengthening education in the sciences, mathematics, engineering and English;
    - streamlining government bureaucracy to reduce unnecessary personnel expenditures (besides reducing corruption);
    - doing away with laws, rules and regulations that give government personnel, like the BIR and Customs the discretion to allow or disallow certain deductions or exemptions, etc.
    - prioritizing agricultural development and attaining a high degree of self-sufficiency by encouraging productivity through the introduction of new technologies and improvement of infrastructure;
    - creating microfinance and other credit facilities for small enterprises by harnessing OFW remittances and other savings for economic development;
    - encouraging livelihood, formation of cooperatives and other small enterprises development programs to alleviate poverty;
    - pursuing in earnest the Agrarian Reform Program;
    - promoting industrialization by encouraging the expansion of appropriate industries, including telecommunications and information technology, to more effectively harness our God-given resources for the economic well-being of the people;
    - attaining a stable balance of trade by encouraging the development of new export products and improving existing ones; and
    - participating gradually and judiciously in the global economy, given that globalization is ongoing.

Social Dimension (Political Culture)

34. End the practice of appointing former military officer to the position of Secretary of National Defense based on the principle of civilian supremacy over the military.
35. The Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall have a fixed term of three (3) years regardless of the statutory age of retirement.
36. Active military and police personnel shall not be assigned as aides and security officers.
37. Disallow elected and appointed public officials from writing regular columns, acting in movies and television shows, acting as commentators or anchorpersons on radio and television, and appearing on TV and radio commercials and print advertisements and billboards.
38. End the unwholesome practice of setting up billboards in public places naming the public official responsible for the project.
39. Apply to anyone the Constitutional ban against relatives of incumbent government officials up to the third degree from seeking public office simultaneously or succeeding the former, and to make it unlawful for any member of the Senate or the House of Representatives to run for another office without first resigning from his/her position six months before the elections.
40. To promote national and local candidates (servant-leaders) who are morally upright and competent and who subscribe to the founding principles and platform of the Party.
41. In addition to the Constitutional requirements to run for public office, candidates for President, Vice-President, Senators and Congressmen must possess a college or university degree.
42. Submit to the Filipino people proposed amendments to the Philippine Constitution consistent with the principles, values and objectives of the Party.

National Officers: Manolo K. Dayrit, Chairman, David Lim, Vice-Chairman, Mario E. Ongkiko, President, Benny de Guzman, Vice-President-Treasurer, Nandy Pacheco, Secretary-General, Amading Astudillo, Deputy Secretary-General, Ting Enriquez, Deputy Secretary-General.

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Bishop scores NPA use of land mines

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR—THE land mine that exploded and killed a town police chief and his deputy on Wednesday afternoon was so powerful that it charred the victims' bodies and threw them 45 meters away, police said yesterday.

As this developed, Butuan Bishop Juan de dios Pueblos criticized the New People's Army (NPA) for using land mines, which, he said, was illegal and immoral.

"I strongly condemn killings using this kind of instrument," Pueblos told reporters here.

The incident occurred more than a year after a similar attack staged by the NPA wounded at least six soldiers in Jabonga, Agusan del Norte.

As in the 2005 attack, the NPA land mine explosion in San Luis that killed Insp. Enrico Bamba and his deputy, SPO2 Esperidion Palma, took place as the anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines was drawing near.

A follow-up report by the Agusan del Sur police said that Bamba and Palma were riding on a motorcycle on their way home with some soldiers after securing a fiesta celebration when the land mine went off in Sitio Bayanihan in Barangay Robaco, at around 2:45 p.m.

Earlier, a police spokesperson said the government troops were responding to an emergency call when the explosion occurred.

Chief Insp. Mangandog Arab, operations chief of the provincial police, said the soldiers, who were aboard a military truck, and the other policemen, who were riding on another motorcycle, were able to fire at the rebels but failed to hit any of them.

Arab said the land mine that killed the two police officers could have actually been intended for the soldiers.

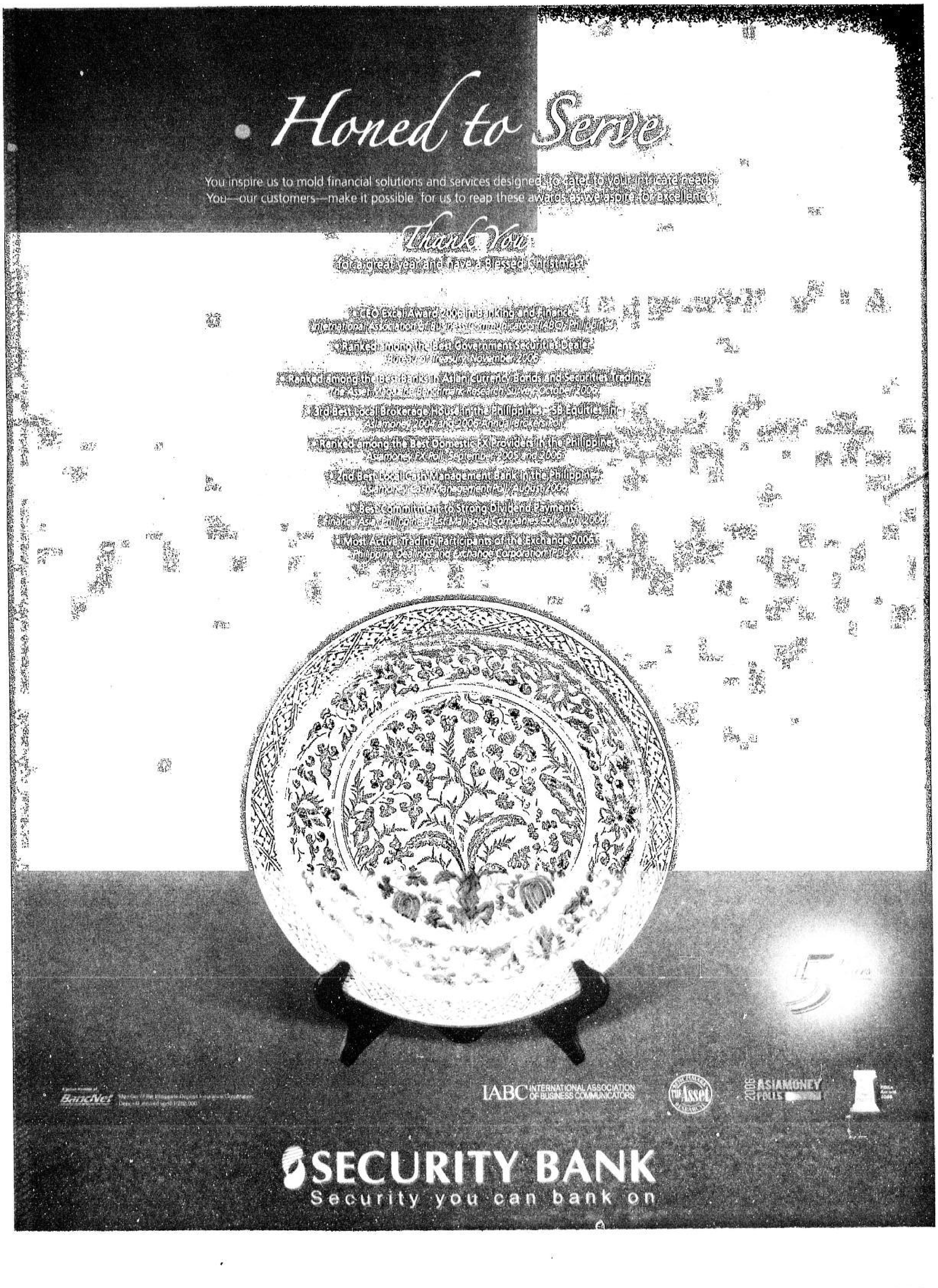
He said the rebels might have changed their mind and took Bamba and Palma as their targets because the two had earlier led pursuit operations against them during an attack on a cell site.

Arab said investigators later recovered Bamba's 9-mm pistol but the M-16 rifle of his deputy was believed to have been shattered into pieces along with the Honda SR200 motorcycle they were riding.

Bishop Pueblos said the NPA's continued use of land mines had become a "cause of concern" for the Church.

He said he would ask the NPA to stop using the device if he could establish contacts with them.

"But the problem now is that I don't know whom to talk to," Pueblos, a member of the Melo Commission, said. *Chris V. Panganiban and Franklin A. Caliguid, Inquirer Mindanao*



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SECURITY BANK
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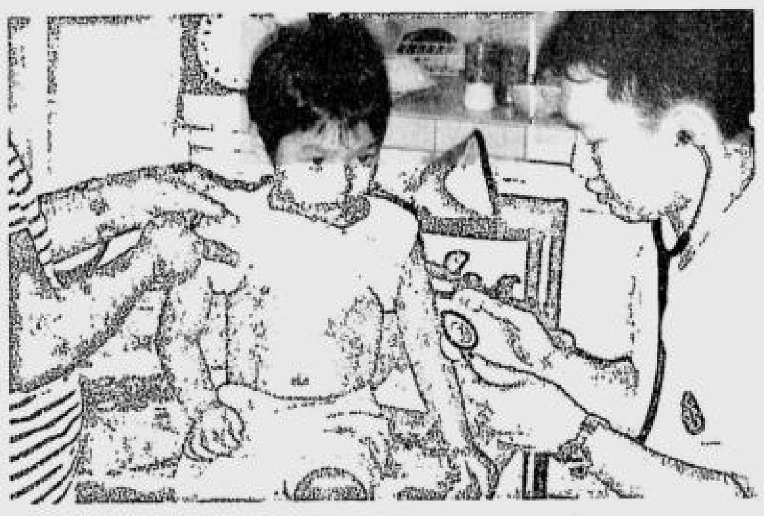
Fratmen bring medical aid to typhoon survivors

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon



CHILDREN from Barangay Sagumayon in Legazpi City were among the beneficiaries of the two-day medical mission and relief operations conducted by the Pi Sigma Fraternity. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

LEGAZPI CITY—While cradling her 4-month-old son Carl Justine to stop him from crying, Leonida Flores patiently waited for two hours inside the cramped health center in Barangay Buraguis here to have her baby checked up by a volunteer doctor from Manila.

She said that after being drenched in rainwater for several hours during the onslaught of Supertyphoon "Reming" two weeks ago, she and her four children had been suffering from colds and coughs.

Reming, one of the most destructive typhoons to hit the country in recent years, triggered the flow of volcanic mud and debris from the slopes of Mayon Volcano and buried communities around it.

More than 1,000 people were either killed or missing because of the mudslides.

"Because of his coughs, my baby would usually wake up late at night and cry until the wee hours. He will only stop until he gets tired of crying," the 46-year-old mother said.

Like most of their neighbors, Flores said they had not been getting proper medical attention since all the free medical checkups offered by the local government were only in evacuation centers, several kilometers from their houses.

"Instead of paying for the tricycle fare, we can use that money to buy food," she told the INQUIRER in the dialect.

Donations

Flores was in near tears when she received anticough medicines and vitamin capsules from members of the Pi Sigma Fraternity Alumni Association (PSFAA) who organized a medical mission and relief operations on Dec. 17-18.

"We are very thankful for your help. You were actually the first ones who visited us here for a medical mission," she told the volunteers.

Jay Dimaiwat, PSFAA president, said Buraguis was just one of the 11 barangays his group visited in six Albay towns that suffered the most from the devastation.

Aside from free medical services, Dimaiwat and his group also brought more than 600 bags—each containing two kilos of rice, canned goods, candles, shampoo, toothpaste and other items—for the typhoon victims who had returned to their communities.

They also donated more than 20 boxes of used clothing which they brought to a select evacuation center in Daraga.

"We really intended to help those families who have not been directly receiving aid because they already left the evacuation centers to start rebuilding their damaged houses," he said.

Aside from this capital city, fraternity members also provided relief items in the towns of Camalig, Daraga, Sto. Domingo, Bacacay and Tiwi.

Two-week preparation

Ruben Felipe, the program coordinator, said the group immediately contacted other alumni fraternity members after learning of the "unbelievable destruction" that Reming wrought in Albay.

"When we saw images of the victims and their grief over losing their loved ones on television, we felt the need to quickly mobilize our organization to help in whatever way we could," Felipe said.

In just 14 days, the fraternity was able to gather more than P100,000 cash and several boxes of medicines, food items and used clothes.

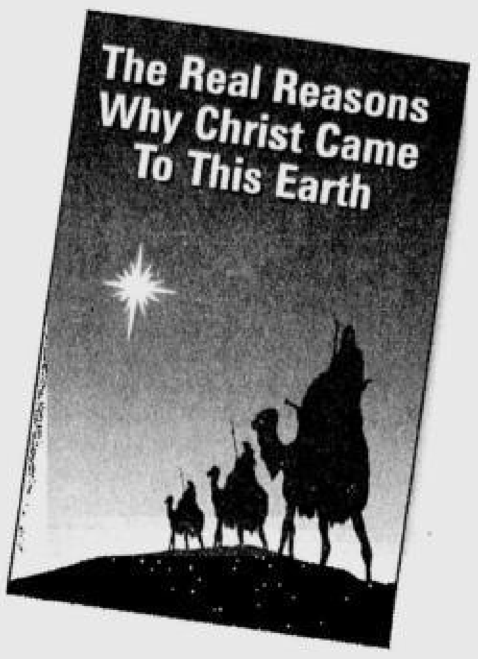
Dimaiwat said the group also got in touch with several of their chapters in Albay for relief operations in the most affected areas.

He said he was surprised that their members in Bicol had already started giving food items and old clothes.

"We were challenged by the fact that while some of our members were themselves victims of the typhoon, it did not deter them from helping their neighbors," he said.

He said the fraternity intended to start their "Adopt A School" project early next year to help repair school buildings and link with other organizations to help in the relocation of families who lost their houses.

The Real Reasons Why Christ Came to this Earth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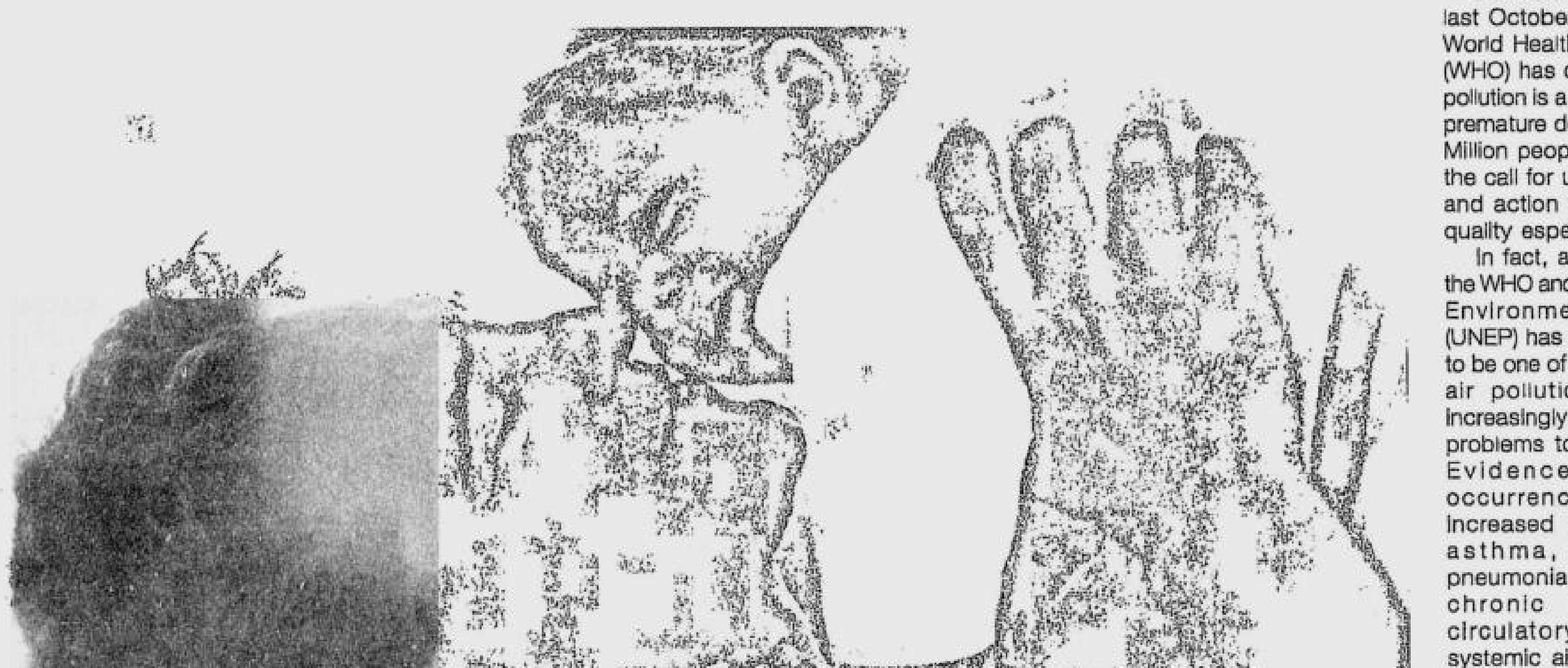

Pollution Kills
2 Million People a Year
- World Health Organization

Honeywell Heeds Call for Air Quality Improvement

In a worldwide statement last October 5, 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) has concluded that pollution is a major cause of premature deaths of over 2 Million people a year, thus the call for urgent concern and action to improve air quality especially in cities.

In fact, a joint study by the WHO and United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) has claimed Manila to be one of 20 cities where air pollution is posing increasingly serious health problems to its residents. Evidence of such occurrences includes increased prevalence of asthma, allergies, pneumonia, lung cancer, chronic respiratory, circulatory and other systemic ailments among Filipino children and adults. The Department of Health (DOH) also disclosed that major pollution hotspots are concentrated along major roads and dense traffic networks, thus, many people seek a place of safety such as their homes, to avoid outdoor air pollution.

However, the struggle for clean air does not stop at home.

The truth is that indoor-air pollution is often worse than outdoor air pollution. Major causes of this would include poor room ventilation, faulty equipment and appliances, outdoor cigarette dust and smoke that come in and stay indoors. A report made by the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA), states that indoor air pollution can be two to five times higher than levels outdoors, and ranked indoor air pollution as a top public health concern. This is so since an enclosed indoor environment causes a decrease in air quality as less ventilation occurs. In fact, airborne contaminants that can be harmful to one's health are trapped and even re-circulated in the room.

In the wake of such alarming reports, it has become increasingly important to protect one's self and loved ones from the harmful dangers of air pollution, thus, making Honeywell (a world-wide recognized forerunner in home-environment products), answer the call for better air quality. Recently, Honeywell introduced in the Philippines an array of air purifiers with varying filtering efficiencies and area coverage capacities to suit the public's different needs and requirements.

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Another model, the IFD (Intelligent Filter Design) features a whisper-quiet fan and a permanent filter that needs no replacement, ever. With enhanced HEPA performance and bacteria/germ reduction properties, it is proven to reduce airborne mold spores, fungus, bacteria as well as dust, pollen, dander, and tobacco smoke particles from a room. It also has an efficiency rate ranging from 95%-99%, recommended for most people suffering from seasonal allergies and who are in search of an effective and low maintenance way to clean the air in their homes.

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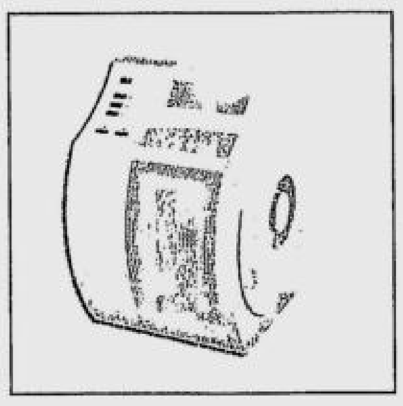

It is important to protect our loved ones from the dangers of air pollution. Honeywell air cleaners are recommended by the American Lung Association and are proven to remove 99.97% of harmful airborne particles*. Recognized worldwide as a leading provider in home environment products, it has a variety of air cleaners to suit your many needs in air cleaning. With Honeywell air cleaners, you can now let your family breathe through safe, clean air.

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Floods put Bacolod, Talisay in calamity state

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—THE LOCAL governments of Bacolod and Talisay separately placed the adjoining cities in a state of calamity late Wednesday after floodwaters rising up to five feet inundated streets, buildings and houses and forced thousands to flee their homes.

The floods, caused by heavy rains and exacerbated by high tide, destroyed at least 113 houses, clogged up streets, and forced over 2,000 families to leave their homes shortly before 1 a.m. Wednesday.

The heavy rains, brought on by tropical depression "Tomas," lasted for about three hours from midnight to 3 a.m. Wednesday.

The city councils of Bacolod and Talisay declared their cities in a state of calamity past 5 p.m. Wednesday.

The separate declarations would enable the city governments of Bacolod and Talisay to release emergency funds to assist the flood victims.

Bacolod Mayor Evelio Leonardia ordered the release of P5 million to assist the flood victims.

Talisay Mayor Eric Saratan said a state of calamity was declared in his city so funds could be used to aid 13 flood-hit barangays.

Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra also appealed for assistance. The Social Action Center of The Diocese of Bacolod has started gathering donations in goods and cash, he said.

In Bacolod City, flooded streets caused many cars to stall while a house floated down the road and hit stalled vehicles in Barangay Mandalagan, where the water rose to as high as five feet at the height of the heavy downpour.

Many parts of Bacolod City was flooded, affecting 28 of its 61 barangays.

Bacolod residents blamed the poor drainage as having caused the flooding.

About 60 patients of the Bacolod Our Lady of Mercy Specialty Hospital wards located in its basement had to be transferred to other floors after it came under four feet of floodwaters.

Equipment, including computers, and documents in their offices estimated to cost P10 million were also damaged, said Dr. Evangeline Johnson, hospital president and chief operating officer.

In Barangay Tangub, flooding also killed 53 fighting cocks worth thousands of pesos.

Rafael Abello said the water that entered his property rose to 7 feet causing his fighting cocks to drown.

He said the flooding was caused by the Department of Public Works and Highways' work on the road in front of his house. The DPWH covered a canal and replaced it with a small drainage system to save money, he said.

Abello said he expected the flooding in his area to keep recurring because of substandard work and he does not know what recourse he can take.

A Bacolod city hall report said the flood affected 2,091 families, who were brought to nine evacuation centers, totally destroyed 106 houses and partially damaged 197 houses.

Isagani Republica of the Negros Occidental Provincial Disaster Management Team said 76 families were evacuated and seven houses were washed out in nine barangays in Talisay City.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said the provincial government immediately sent food assistance to Talisay City.

Isabela power co-op asked to return ₱30M to consumers

ILAGAN, ISABELA—THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has ordered the Isabela Electric Cooperative II to return at least P30 million in overcharges to its consumers.

The order came after the ERC discovered that the final reduction rate it allowed was "higher than [the one] provisionally granted."

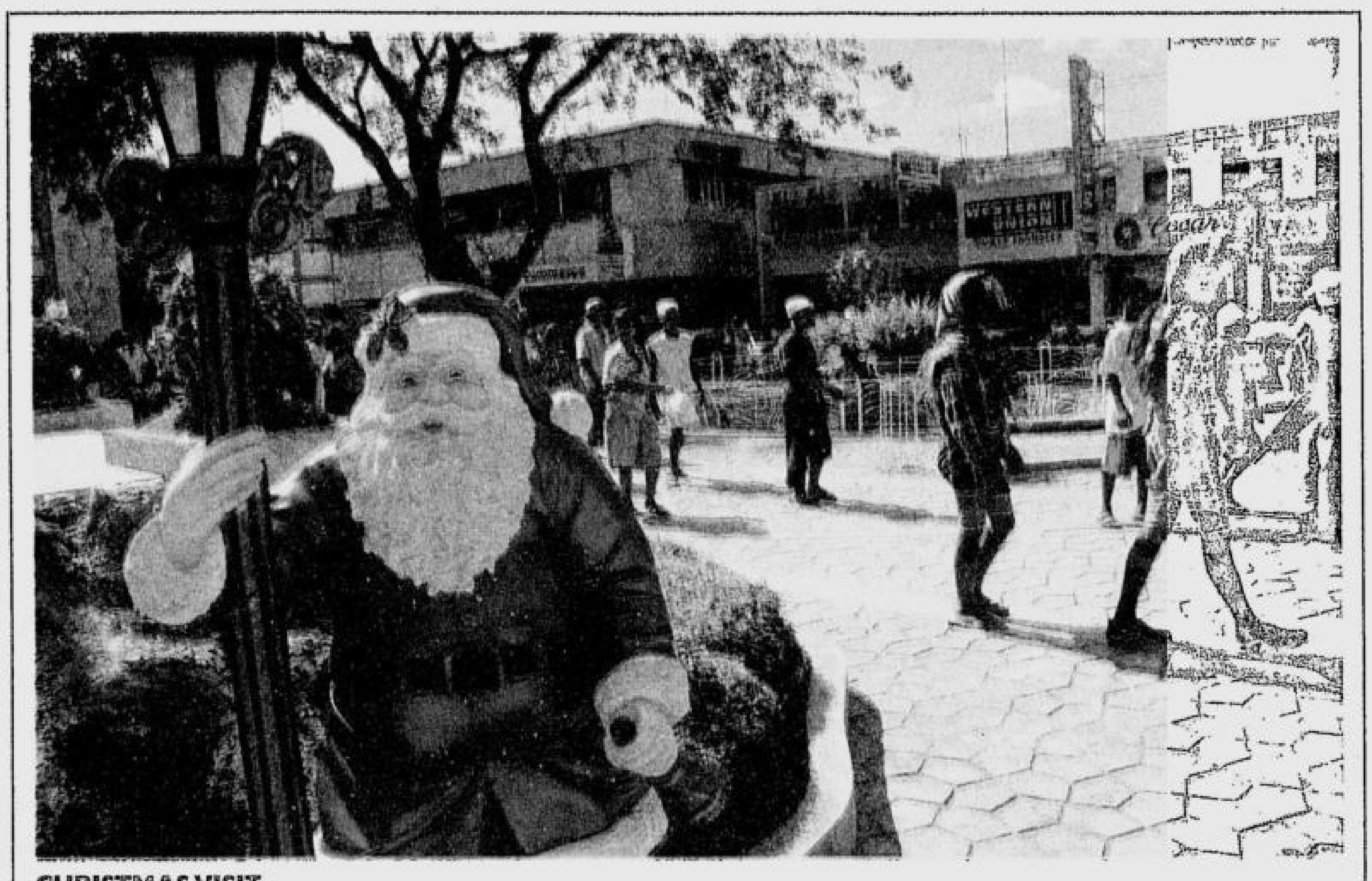
The P30,013,869.17 total refundable amount was the difference between the provisional and final rates imposed by the cooperative from July 2004 to September 2005, the order said.

At least a million residential, commercial and industrial consumers of Iselco II stand to benefit from the refund. Of the total refundable amount, more than P21 million would be returned to residential consumers.

"With such an order, the body ensures consumer education and protection and promotes the competitive operations in the electricity market," ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said.

Earlier, cooperative officials here were criticized after they allegedly imposed an unauthorized power rate increase from November 2005 to June this year. Three cooperative officials were suspended for the offense.

Rafael Jacinto II, vice president of the Isabela Consumers Watch, assailed Iselco II officials following complaints from consumers regarding poor services, inconsistent policy on power disconnections and excessive allowances and benefits of the cooperative's officials. *Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*



CHRISTMAS VISIT
Ata folk walk past a statue of Santa Claus in front of Davao City Hall, where hundreds of "lumad" congregate from far-flung barangays every December to do caroling and solicit clothes from city dwellers. BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Food, cash for work program for 'Reming' survivors

LEGAZPI CITY—AS RELIEF OPerations are giving way to rehabilitation, nongovernment organizations in Albay are taking their help a step further by allowing families affected by Supertyphoon "Reming" to earn money and food in exchange for work.

With a $200,000 (P9.8 million)-funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Vision, an NGO focused on helping children, has enlisted villagers in at least three towns in Albay (Sto. Domingo, Bacacay and Malilipot) for work.

"We hire people to clear roads and build houses that were swept away by typhoons within their own communities," according to Socorro Melic of World Vision's communication team.

A worker gets to earn P200 a day (P100 in cash and P100 worth of rice or at least 5 kilos).

The program, added Melic, is designed to help families until "they are able to get back on their feet, while waiting for gainful employment."

World Vision's target is to help 3,337 families with the food-for-work scheme.

"It'll run for two weeks and we started Thursday last week in Sto. Domingo," Melic said.

World Vision Development Foundation describes itself as a Christian child-focused, development, humanitarian and advocacy organization in the Philippines.

It has put up "child-friendly spaces" (CFS) in at least three barangays (Busai, Binitayan and Lidong) in Daraga, Albay, one of the worst hit towns of Reming and mudflows from Mayon volcano on Nov. 30.

CFS is a psychosocial intervention for children who recently experienced traumatic experiences such as disasters.

CFS tents are put up where children can enjoy and feel safe while they play, sing, socialize, and learn from one another.

When mudslides buried the village of Guinsaugon in the town of St. Bernard, Southern Leyte in February 2006, World Vision put up CFS in two evacuation centers that enabled child survivors of the tragedy to go on with their lives. *Delma L. Peyra, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Landslide, flood alert up over E. Visayas

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE OFFICE of Civil Defense in Eastern Visayas yesterday directed all local governments in the region to activate their respective disaster councils in the light of the incessant rains that might result to landslide and flooding incidents.

For several days now, the region had been experiencing heavy downpour that has resulted to a landslide incident in Barangay Agas-Agas, Sogod town in Southern Leyte.

The regional office of the Department of Public Works and Highways had issued a public advisory on the temporary closure of the road section due to the landslide. It was closed for public use Tuesday night.

Last February, seven persons died due to a landslide in Barangay Agas-Agas, the main route of vehicles from Leyte province to Southern Leyte.

Rey Gozon, administrative officer of OCD-8, said that due to the incessant rains, several rivers in the region, particularly located in the Samar provinces, are being closely monitored by their office for any possible flooding.

Alert

These rivers are the Catubig and Gandara Rivers (Samar); Dolores River (Eastern Samar); and Catarman and Pambukhan Rivers (Northern Samar).

"We advise people living in low lying areas and near mountain slopes of aforementioned river systems to be always on alert for any possible flash floods," Gozon said.

The region was recently hit by Typhoon "Seniang" that killed nine persons—two each in Naval and Caibiran towns in Biliran; two in Lawaan, Eastern Samar and one each from Babatngon, Barugo, both in Leyte and this city.

Benedicto Baras, 43, of district 4 Babatngon town was reported missing up to this time. Ten persons were injured due to the typhoon.

The typhoon displaced 41,889 families, consisting of 254,208 persons. Damage to infrastructure was placed at P56 million and P282 million for the agriculture sector.

42 Pangasinan fishermen rescued; 68 more missing

By Gabriel Cardinoza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—FORTY-TWO more fishermen from five coastal towns of western Pangasinan and Zambales have been rescued from the South China Sea Wednesday, reducing the number of missing fishermen since Saturday to 68.

The Infanta government has declared a state of calamity and started distributing relief goods to the fishing village of Cato, where most of the fishermen live.

As of 11 a.m. Thursday, 42 fishermen from Infanta were still missing; four from Bolinao, five from Agno, 11 from Dasol, all in Pangasinan, and six from Sta. Cruz, Zambales, according to Infanta police chief Insp. Randy Maluyo.

He said the number included 13 additional missing fishermen from Bolinao, Agno, Dasol and Sta. Cruz, Zambales.

Charlito Maniago, Cato barangay captain, said they needed the relief goods because fishermen in his village had temporarily stopped fishing.

"Many of them are afraid because this is the first time that this happened to them. That's why until now, the fishermen are afraid to go to the sea," he said.

He said 80 percent of his village's population subsist cn fishing.

Maluyo said search-and-rescue operations resumed on Thursday with two Army helicopters flying over the Scarborough Shoal, which is about 140 nautical miles from the shores of Infanta. There were reports that several fishermen were still there.

It was learned that the two Huey helicopters used in the search-and-rescue operations since Monday could only be airborne for two hours, reaching only about 35 nautical miles from the shore.

Maniago said most of the fishermen were at a fishing ground about 80 to 120 nautical miles from Infanta.

The last fishermen rescued on Wednesday were cousins Arnold, 48, and Abeto Lapiz. They were found by fishermen at about 5 p.m. clinging to their overturned boat about 40 miles off Pundakit Island in San Antonio, Zambales.

Maniago said the two were in a state of shock when they were brought to the Infanta health center.

"They were too weak. We can't talk to them. Their eyes were just open," he said.

He said he was told by the cousins that they lost their companion, Raymart Montes, when he was swept by strong waves as they removed their boat's outriggers after they overturned their boat to stop it from sinking.

"They were so hungry that they ate their own clothes," Maniago said.

He said the rescue of the fishermen has rekindled residents' hopes that the missing fishermen may still be alive.

"We still hope that they will come home alive because the weather is good. And last night, we were encouraged that many returned alive," he said.

Maluyo said no body has been recovered so far. But he said his office was confirming reports that a body was found in the shores of Sto. Tomas town in La Union.

The fishermen were swept by strong wind locally known as "*nortada* (north wind)" that whipped up giant waves at about midnight on Dec. 15 until the following day.

Boxes with chocolates, checks thrown in Dagupan

DAGUPAN CITY—POLICE HERE were puzzled about the recovery of two boxes containing government checks, packets of chocolates and Christmas cards that were thrown from a van passing through Barangay Bonuan Binloc here on Wednesday.

City police chief Supt. Edgar Basbas said more than 100 checks were inside the two boxes with the label "Japan Post." The checks were in envelopes addressed to individuals from different provinces, such as Cagayan and Cavite, he said.

Photographs of people, whom police believed were Japanese, were also found inside the boxes.

Basbas said the checks were issued by the Social Security System, Land Bank of the Philippines' Taft Avenue branch, the United Coconut Planters Bank and the Supreme Court.

Residents of Bonuan Binloc said they saw the two boxes being thrown out of the van on Wednesday dawn. They failed to note the van's plate number.

The residents, according to Basbas, retrieved the boxes and gave them to Councilor Chito Samson who owns a farm in the area.

Samson, in turn, turned over the boxes to the police.

The police were still conducting inventory of the boxes' contents.

Basbas said one check, for P500, was issued on Dec. 10 while another, worth P11,000, was issued on Dec. 18.

He said he has asked representatives of the concerned agencies to look at the checks.

Basbas said a representative from the Landbank here asked for a copy of a check to verify if this was genuine.

He said they were also checking information that the boxes belonged to a shipment contained in a government mail truck in Central Luzon that was reportedly hijacked recently. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

ROUNDUP

Monkayo exec killed

DAVAO CITY—The deputy mayor for Muslim Affairs in Monkayo town in Compostela Valley province was shot dead on Saturday night. Provincial police chief Supt. Nestor Quinsay identified the victim as a certain Sultan Asis, a resident of Monkayo Poblacion. Quinsay told the INQUIRER personal grudge was being eyed as a possible motive of the two unidentified assailants who killed the victim inside a gymnasium at about 9 p.m. Friday. Quinsay ruled out politics, adding that police already have suspects, but refused to identify them pending their arrest.

Dennis Jay Santos, Inquirer Mindanao

NPA rebs slain in clash

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Three New People's Army (NPA) rebels, including the secretary of the Far South Mindanao Region, were killed in an encounter with government forces in the hinterland areas of Columbio town, Sultan Kudarat last Friday. Col. Vic Porto, 1002nd Army Brigade commander, identified the slain communist leader as Catalino Tacadao alias Tatay Asyo. Also killed were Ruperto Casamorin alias Vergel, the Main Regional Guerrilla Unit (MRGU) Sniper platoon leader, and Ivy Jacilan, the MRGU medical team leader. Porto said a platoon of the Army's 27th Infantry Battalion participating in a Brigade combat operation attacked the NPA camp in Barangay Datal Blao in Columbio. Government troops also recovered assorted firearms, two mobile phones, documents and electrical wire and blasting caps for land mine use. Porto said the fleeing rebels also carried with them four dead comrades.

Aquiles Zonio and Eldie Aguirre, Inquirer Mindanao

Donations for Pangasinan housing

DAGUPAN CITY—The Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. has donated P1 million to the city government for the construction of 16 additional houses at a Gawad Kalinga housing project in Barangay Bonuan Gueset here. Richard Ferrer, PLDT first vice president and concurrent president and chief executive officer of the Makati Medical Center, turned over the check to Mayor Benjamin Lim. The Gawad Kalinga housing project here has provided houses to 74 families.

Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

A. Baes; 58

DR. ALOYSIUS "Ochie" Baes, former University of the Philippines at Los Baños chemistry professor and board chair of the Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines died at past 3 p.m. yesterday at the National Kidney Institute. He was 58 years old. His last stint with the CEC was as a member of the Rapu-Rapu Fact-finding Commission that recommended several environmental measures for the Rapu-Rapu mine in Albay. Details of his wake and interment will be announced later, according to the CEC.

STURDY PILI TREE
Bald trees like this 40-foot pili tree along the highway in Barangay Padang, Legazpi City are a common sight in Albay after powerful winds of Typhoon "Reming" blew its leaves away. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MILF not involved in clashes, says gov't

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE GOVERNMENT's ceasefire team said the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was not involved in the recent Maguindanao clashes as an organization.

Brig. Gen. Edgardo Gurrea, chair of the government's Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH), however, admitted that the violence could have eventually dragged the MILF as a whole if it was not immediately addressed.

"We managed to patch up the differences. Had we not been able to address it, it could have escalated," Gurrea said.

At least 10 rebels were reportedly killed during clashes with militiamen in Rajah Buayan, Maguindanao, on Dec. 15.

"It has nothing to do with the AFP and the MILF. It's actually a family feud involving civilian volunteers and some members of the MILF," he said.

Earlier, Col. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division in Maguindanao, said the clashes were an offshoot of an MILF attack and the military was filing protests.

Later, Maj. Gen. Nehemias Pajarito, 6th ID commander, said it was apparent that the reports reaching him were mixed up.

"The reports were mixed up. The firefight was not between the MILF and the AFP. It's between the CVO and some MILF members who have been maintaining long time grudges," he said.

Pajarito said he was happy that "despite so many incidents (in Maguindanao), the ceasefire remained in place."

But Pajarito expressed alarm over unsolved feuds in the province saying these could trigger more violence.

Ando, meanwhile, accused the MILF of lacking control over its guerrillas. *Julie Alipala and Charlie Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

DENR execs stop Baguio snow project

BAGUIO CITY—TOP ENVIRONMENT officials cancelled the summer capital's often-ridiculed "snow show" for Christmas following concerns raised on the snow's impact on pollution.

Environment Undersecretaries Manuel Gerochi and Teresita Castillo were among the officials who discouraged the city government from showering downtown Baguio with manufactured snow until the Department of Environment and Natural Resources cleared the project, according to acting Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr.

Bautista attended last week the 5th Better Air Quality workshop sponsored by the international Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, where he was informed about the officials' cancellation of the show.

Baguio is one of 10 Asian cities piloting clean air management techniques offered by the initiative's Clean Cities program.

Air quality reports from 2000 to 2005 place the highest concentration of pollution emitted by vehicles on Session Road, where most businesses are concentrated.

"We don't know what the final makeup of the snow machines would produce but we must ensure they don't make the pollution worse," one of the officials said.

Bautista said he was baffled by the DENR's concern. He said machines that would manufacture snow would use raw water, and no chemical additives.

"I think they [Gerochi and Castillo] were under the impression I was going to produce real snow by seeding the clouds," Bautista told the INQUIRER.

He said the local government has asked Gerochi and Castillo to provide them with specific guidelines to determine how they would proceed.

The snow show requires snow manufacturing equipment and blowers installed strategically atop some of the city's tallest buildings.

The machines were donated by businessmen, "and will not cost the city a centavo," Bautista said.

He said he was certain the snow show will not do the Baguio ecology discernible harm, unlike the pollution emitted by city vehicles.

"It is unfortunate [the snow show] has not been well received. I intend to proceed with the project, even if it starts after Christmas," he said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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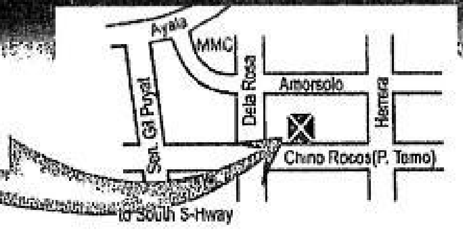

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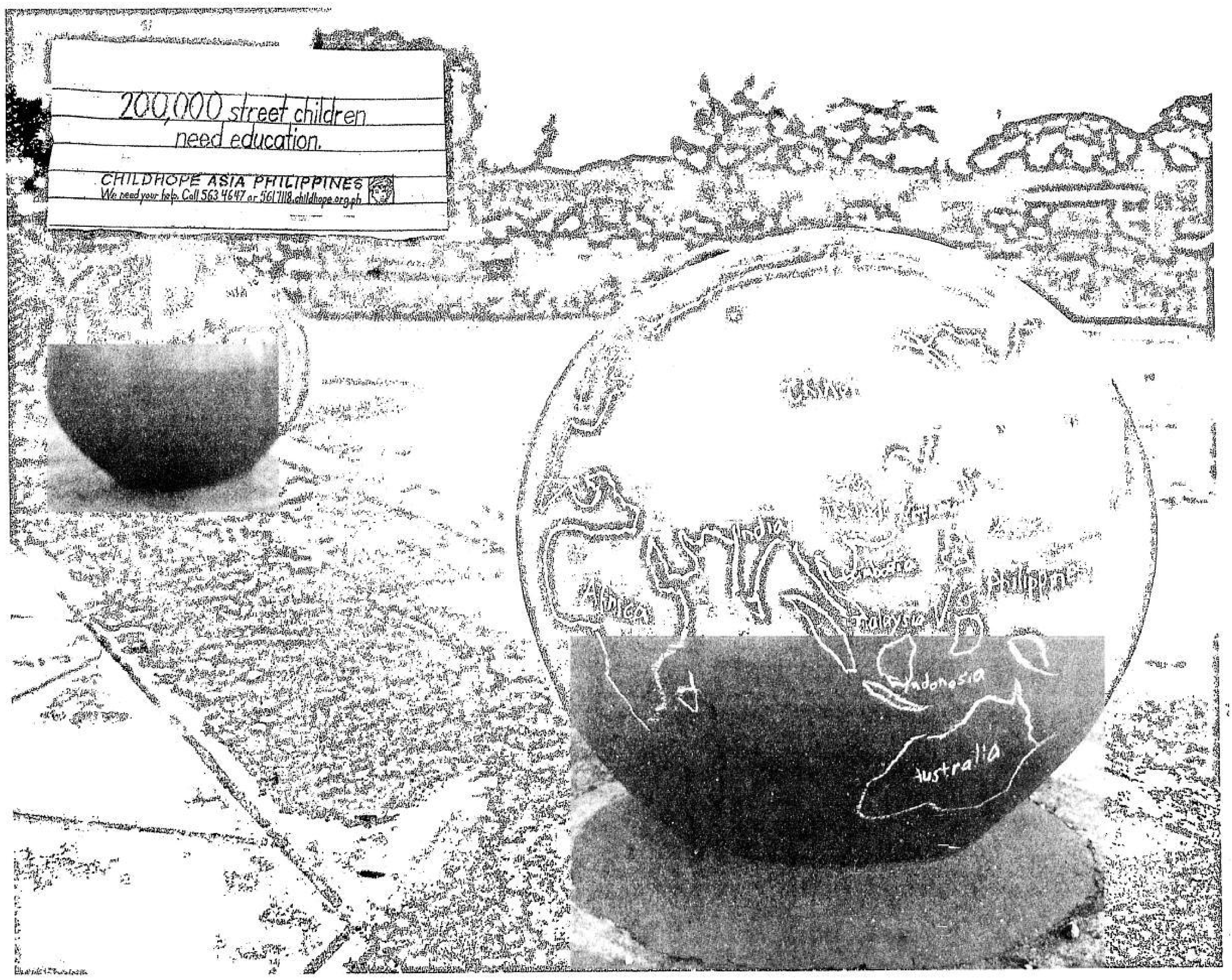

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Victims of Petron oil spill receive payments

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

RESIDENTS of Guiwanon Island of Barangay Cabalagnan in Nueva Valencia, Guimaras, are slowly recovering from the ill effects of the Petron oil spill in their community.

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—FOUR MONTHS AFTER A massive oil spill hit Guimaras province and devastated his livelihood, fisherman Eric Gomia, 41, is looking forward to having a new fishing boat.

The Land Bank check amounting to P11,598 would still be short of the estimated P40,000 for the new boat but this would be enough for the down payment.

"We could manage. This would be a new start for us," said Gomia.

Francisco Palacios, 62, a shell gatherer, has a check of P4,488, part of which he will use to buy himself a pair of pants and shirt for Christmas.

Estelita Gumaca, 59, of Naoway Island received P15,546. She plans to use the money to buy new fishing nets and spaghetti and bread for her family's noche buena (Christmas Eve feast).

"It's not much but it's better than getting nothing at all," said Gumaca.

Settlement for economic losses

They were among the 400 residents of Sibunag town who received yesterday compensation for economic losses incurred after the M/T Solar 1 sank in stormy seas off Guimaras on Aug. 11 and dumped more than 2.1 million liters of bunker fuel oil it was transporting for Petron from Bataan to Zamboanga.

The International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund started giving out the checks yesterday at the Iloilo provincial capitol for claimants from Sibunag.

The fisherfolks received amounts ranging from P4,800 to P32,000 from the London-based intergovernmental agency that indemnifies losses resulting from oil spills.

The claimants signed a one-page agreement acknowledging the receipt of checks they could cash within 30 days and agreeing to waive any further court claims from the owners of Solar I related to oil spill damage.

IOPC Deputy Director Joe Nichols who supervised the processing said payments had been made to claimants from the towns of San Lorenzo and Jordan.

Claims of residents in Nueva Valencia and Buenavista would be settled in January and February, respectively.

Other claimants to follow

"We hope to finish the first round of payments by the first quarter of next year and then proceed to another round of processing and payments for the late claimants," Nichols told the INQUIRER.

The IOPC is paying around US$2.4 million (P118.5 million at P49.375=$1) for Guimaras claimants in the fishing sector, said Nichols.

This is compensation for 11,225 claimants in Guimaras, including 1,383 in San Lorenzo, 594 in Jordan, 1,553 in Sibunag, 5,228 in Nueva Valencia and 2,467 in Buenavista.

The amount excludes claims by those involved in the seaweed industry and fishpond owners, which are still being processed.

Nichols said IOPC had also released interim payments to 24 of the 34 claimants in the tourism industry, ranging from P1,000 to P250,000.

He said the IOPC would release more payments for resort owners in January and "until their business gets back on their feet" because the assessment of losses of the affected resorts was still continuing.

The peak season for tourists in Guimaras is between October and June.

The IOPC will also process and release compensation for affected residents in the towns of Oton, Concepcion and Ajuy in Iloilo after the Guimaras claimants have been paid.

Lower than expected

The claimants said the compensation was below the amount they were expecting but they said their claims would take longer if they asked for a higher compensation.

"We are thankful that we have received this amount even if it is not much," said 55-year-old Ana Tanaleon.

Before the oils spill, Tanaleon said she could sell 6 kilos of fish at P80 during a good day but almost nothing at the height of the oil spill in San Isidro village in Sibunag.

The residents said they had returned to fishing but their catch was still not as it was before the August disaster.

The oil spill has affected 5,437 families or 26,740 persons. It has also devastated Guimaras' rich marine life and affected tourist resorts.

Siphoning

Nichols said the planned removal of the remaining fuel from the sunken tanker would proceed in late February next year and was expected to last for 20 days.

The IOPC has signed a contract with a salvage firm for the removal of the remaining cargo from the sunken tanker 640 meters on the sea floor.

The operation is estimated to cost between $6-12 million depending on amount of oil left and duration of operation, said Nichols.

The IOPC has also submitted a contingency plan to the Coast Guard for pollution control in case anything wrong happens during the operation.

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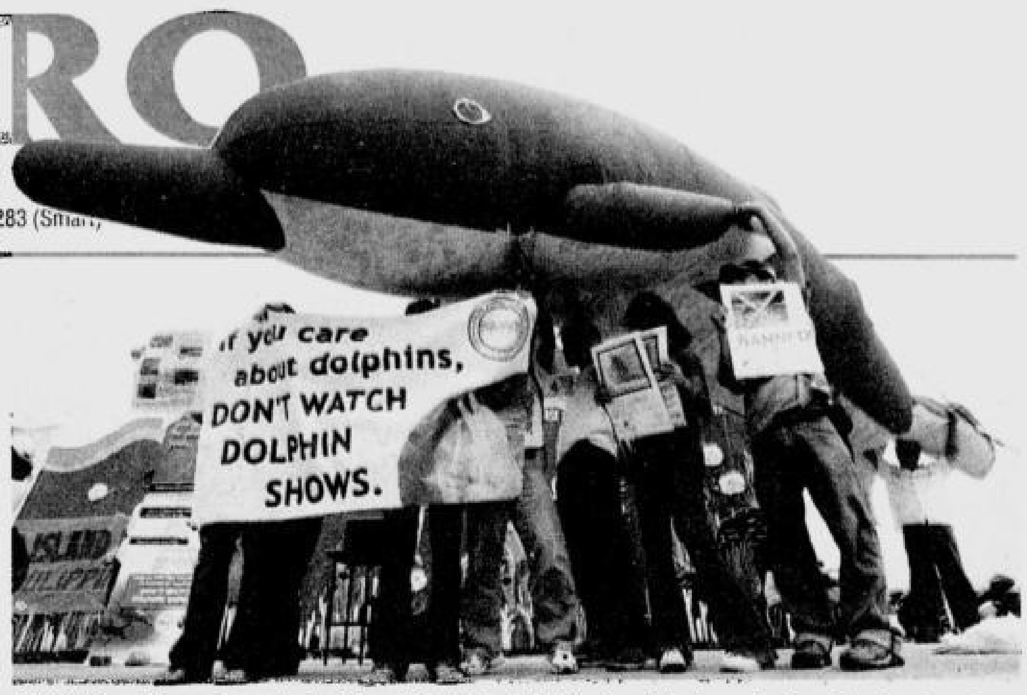
Animal activists picket dolphin show in mall

'Cruelty' to captive performers cited


if you care about dolphins, DON'T WATCH DOLPHIN SHOWS.

ANIMAL welfare advocates hold an inflatable dolphin at a picket protesting the treatment given to performers in a dolphin and sea lion entertainment show. REM ZAMORA

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ENJOY WATCHING THEM ON television, but don't get up close and personal.

Animal rights group gave this advice to the public as they picketed an Indonesian-based traveling dolphin show at the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City yesterday to protest what they called "a cruel form of entertainment."

The show "Wonderful World of Dolphins," which runs until Jan. 7, features two bottlenose dolphins, Tutti and Frutti and their front act, Jello and Jumbo, a father-and-son team of sea lions.

Members of the Philippine Animal Welfare Society Earth Island Institute (EII), Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment and Agham (Science and Technology Advocates for the People) yesterday gave out pamphlets and presented videos aimed at enlightening the public about the "cruelties" that transpire before the dolphins are able to perform.

"What the show actually imparts to its audience is that it's okay to exploit animals for the sake of amusement," said Anna Cabrera, a PAWS director.

The dolphins were hunted down and its parents killed in the process while trying to protect them, she added. "They jump through hoops, but this is not their natural behavior. What many don't know is that these dolphins are starved in order to obey their trainers and are subjected repeatedly to the stress that comes when they are moved from place to place."

Captive dolphins live up to a maximum of 20 years, compared to those in the wild who have a life span of 60 years. Those in captivity eventually turn blind because of the chlorinated water in pools where they are confined.

Trixie Concepcion of EII lamented that the Philippines did not have specific standards for the welfare of performing animals. The group had been lobbying with the Bureau of Animal Industry, the government agency tasked to implement the Animal Welfare Act, to adopt standards but "we have been ignored," she said. Similar shows have already been banned in the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Nicaragua, Australia and New Zealand, the group pointed out.

Meanwhile, Noel Sanchez, assistant vice president of SM Investments Corp., said they were not aware of the "deeper issues" behind such shows when they leased a portion of the mall' property to its organizers, Movers and Shakers.

"They had government permits. We also put up a structure sturdy enough to guarantee the audience's safety," Sanchez said, adding that SM was not involved in the promotion of the show.

Fem Paguio, one of the organizers, who said they were not aware of the "real issues," said both SM and his company vowed this would be their "first and last animal show."

Artifacts' preservation sought in city ordinance

By DJ Yap

ARTIFACTS THAT LIE BURIED IN archeological sites in Quezon City may soon be protected from the indiscriminate digging of construction crews working on road and waterworks projects.

A proposed ordinance requires applicants for building permits and excavation projects in the city to secure an Archaeological Impact Assessment Certification from the National Museum before any digging or drilling starts.

To be called the "QC Archaeological Preservation Ordinance," the measure, now on third reading, shall apply only to sites yet to undergo excavation, and shall exclude areas where previous diggings have been conducted.

It is intended to "protect and conserve pre-historic and historic artifacts and other archeological treasures that could be found buried in areas to be affected by excavation work," said councilor Julian Coseteng, the main proponent.

Under the ordinance, any proposed construction or building project that leads to the discovery or identification of an archeological site shall be held in abeyance until the artifacts are fully retrieved by experts.

Cultural, geological, botanical and zoological materials showing evidence of prehistoric and historic events within the city boundaries shall be turned over to Quezon City Museum. The proposed ordinance also authorizes Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. to enter into an agreement with the National Museum, the Guild of Archaeologists of the Philippines, and other government offices or private groups over the terms of the ordinance.

Tasked to formulate the implementing rules and regulations are the city planning office, the engineering department, and the Environment Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

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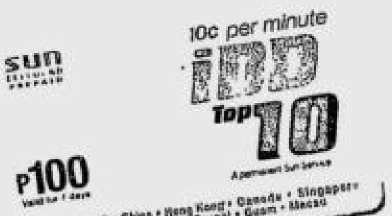
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LRT 1 & 2 to close early on Dec. 24, 31

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE BACLARAN-MONUMENTO light rail transit (LRT 1) and Santolan-Recto LRT 2 will suspend services earlier on Dec. 24 and Dec. 31.

Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) administrator Mel Robles announced Thursday that on those two dates, the last LRT 1 train from Baclaran to Monumento would be at 7:45 p.m. instead of 8:45 p.m. The return trip from Monumento to Baclaran will be 8:15 p.m. instead of 9:30 p.m.

LRT 2 will close one hour earlier on Christmas Eve and two hours earlier on New Year's Eve. On Dec. 24, the last LRT 2 train will leave the Santolan station at 8:30 p.m. instead of 9:30 p.m., arriving in Recto before 9 p.m. The last trip from Recto will be at 9 p.m. instead of 10 p.m.

On Dec. 31, Line 2's last trip from Santolan station to Recto will be at 7:30 p.m., while the last trip from Recto will be at 8 p.m.

Robles said data showed fewer people took the trains on Dec. 24 and Dec. 31, so it was not practical to maintain regular operations.

He added that both dates fell on a Sunday when fewer people took the trains. The schedule will only be for the dates mentioned and normal operation hours would resume promptly on Jan. 1.

Robles added that only 13 trains or 39 coaches will operate on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve for Line 1. On regular days, the line operates 80 coaches or around 25 trains. Line 2 will use 12 trains, but the waiting time will be longer, around seven to 10 minutes, instead of the usual three to four minutes. Apart from minimizing revenue losses, Robles said the shorter schedule would also be good for the employees and facilities. Maintenance work will be done on trains parked at the depot in Pasay City.

Makati completes ₱863M worth of infra projects

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE MAKATI CITY GOVERNMENT announced yesterday it completed some P863 million worth of infrastructure projects this year, even though some officials were almost booted out of office because of allegations of anomaly.

City Hall said yesterday that the engineering department completed the construction and rehabilitation of 10 buildings and facilities, including the P192-million Makati Central Police Station, the Olympic-quality Makati Aqua Sports Center, community halls in barangays Guadalupe Nuevo, Palanan and Bangkal, elementary and high school buildings in Barangay Pitogo, high school building in Barangay Bangkal, and a park and barangay hall in Magallanes.

"The completion of our projects for the year 2006 is part of our continuing efforts to ensure growth and development in the country's premier urban center and to provide residents greater access to quality government facilities and efficient public services," Mayor Jejomar Binay said in a statement.

This year, city officials, including the mayor, Vice Mayor Ernesto Mercado and 16 councilors, were given suspension orders by Malacañang because of allegations that the city maintained ghost employees.

The Court of Appeals also granted the officials' appeal for a preliminary injunction. Malacañang's suspension order was put on hold until the appellate court could review the case's merits. The administrative case was filed by Binay's political adversary, Roberto Brillante.

Binay, his wife Elenita, and several city officials also faced a graft case at the Sandiganbayan based on Brillante's complaint. The case against Binay was later dismissed, but charges against the others remained.

2 more fires hit Metro

By Jocelyn R. Uy
and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A BIG FIRE THAT ATE UP A crowded neighborhood in Muntinlupa City for seven hours on Wednesday left 400 families homeless this Christmas.

The blaze, which started shortly after 5:15 p.m., was traced to the house of Danny Babansad on Sitio Salvacion, a one-hectare squatter colony in Barangay Tunasan, said city fire marshal Supt. Danilo Ortiz.

According to witnesses, some children were playing with firecrackers in Babansad's shanty before the fire incident. "The children could have lit the firecrackers on a bed that soon caught fire," Ortiz told the INQUIRER yesterday.

"The fire spread quickly so we needed more fire trucks to help in putting it out," said Supt. Sofia Mendoza, southern district police marshall said in an interview. The fire destroyed 300 houses, eating up P5 million in property when it was finally put out shortly before 1 a.m. yesterday.

In a separate incident, a fire razed a house in Pasig City the other night, destroying more than P200,000 worth of property.

Pasig Fire Station chief Ricardo Perdigon said the fire apparently broke out in the attic of the three-story house on Hillside Street in Barangay Oranbo.

Three children and their nanny were able to leave the house with no burns or injuries.

DID YOU KNOW

THE METRO Rail Transit 3 (MRT 3), a 16.9-kilometer rail system stretching from North Avenue in Quezon City to Taft Avenue in Pasay City, is one of the government's projects aimed at alleviating traffic in the metropolis. It has 13 stations located in the cities of Quezon, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati and Pasay. These stops are averagely spaced 1.3 kilometers apart.

The MRT's inaugural run was held on Dec. 15, 1999. It was opened to the public the following day. People were given free rides from Dec. 16 to 17 of that year. Its daily ridership figures show there were almost 130 million riders in 2005.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Cherry Foodarama: 57 successful years of customer relations

Cherry Foodarama, the first supermarket in the Philippines, started as a sari-sari store. "My father-in-law owns a small sari-sari store. With four other owners then, they decided to start the business on a bigger scale," says Mrs. Mila Chan, one of its partners today. At that time, they saw how groceries in the US look and they decided to adopt it. Fifty-seven years ago, the first Cherry Foodarama was established in Shaw Boulevard.

With three branches in the country, Shaw Boulevard, Antipolo and Congressional, the company sees no plans for expansion in the near future. They would rather concentrate on serving the customers they have known for so long. Being in the business for several years, Cherry Foodarama's main concern continues to be total customer satisfaction.

The success of Cherry Foodarama is attributed to its devoted customers. "There are families who up to the 4th generation do their grocery here," she exclaims. This supermarket also has a good number of loyal institutional clients. "People go to us because of convenience," she says. The customers of Cherry Foodarama consider its staff as family. "When you do your grocery with us, you feel like you can talk to everybody," she says. "They are already used to us," she adds.

Cherry Foodarama has a complete range of products despite the size of their floor area compared to the hypermarkets. It started the one-stop-shop concept that other big malls followed suit. Chan believes that professionalism, honesty and openness to business drove them to achieve what they have now.

Despite the enormous shopping malls around the country, Chan believes that the low price of their goods is their competitive edge. They are able to do this by paying their suppliers on time. "We pay the suppliers through the bank and we get discounts when we pay on time," she explains. This is given back to the customers by pricing the items low.

With their tradition of personal relationships, it's no surprise that Cherry Foodarama partnered with a bank that is committed to serve its clients. Despite the constant changes in the market, Metrobank has continued to support its clients and sees to it that they continue to receive personal treatment. "My father-in-law has a personal account with Metrobank Acacia Lane. Metrobank became our financial partner in 1999," Chan recalls.

Over the years, clients have trusted Metrobank to deliver a complete range of financial services for all their banking needs and be the business partner they can truly depend on.

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Qaida's Zawahri threatens more attacks on West

DUBAI—AL QAIDA WILL CONTINue to target the United States and other Western countries so long as Muslims are under attack, the militant group's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri said in a video tape aired on Wednesday.

"If we are attacked in our land we shall not stop attacking you in your countries, God willing," Zawahri said in the tape aired by Al Jazeera television.

"The formula for your safety is: You will not dream of security until we live it as a reality in Palestine and all Muslim countries," he said.

Al Qaida, which carried out the Sept. 11 attacks on US cities, has repeatedly vowed more strikes on the United States.

Zawahri last threatened attacks in a videotape in June to avenge the killing of the leader of al Qaida in Iraq.

"Our initial scrub is that this is just a broad list of historical grievances against a range of folks, with no specific threats," said a US intelligence official who spoke on condition of anonymity. "I'm sure it was timed for the holidays, which is when people get nervous about threats." In the tape, Zawahri dismissed US President George W. Bush's argument that combating terrorism can guarantee security and said Washington was scrambling for an exit from Iraq and Afghanistan, but was approaching the wrong parties.

He appeared to be calling on Washington to open a dialogue with insurgency leaders in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Both Democrats and Republicans are scrambling to find an exit from the disasters in Afghanistan and Iraq and are still thinking with the same rash mentality and trying to negotiate with some sides to secure your exit but these sides cannot offer you an escape and your attempts will only bring more failure.

"You are not negotiating with the real powers in the Muslim world and you appear to be heading towards a painful round of negotiations, after which you will forced to talks to the real forces..." he said.

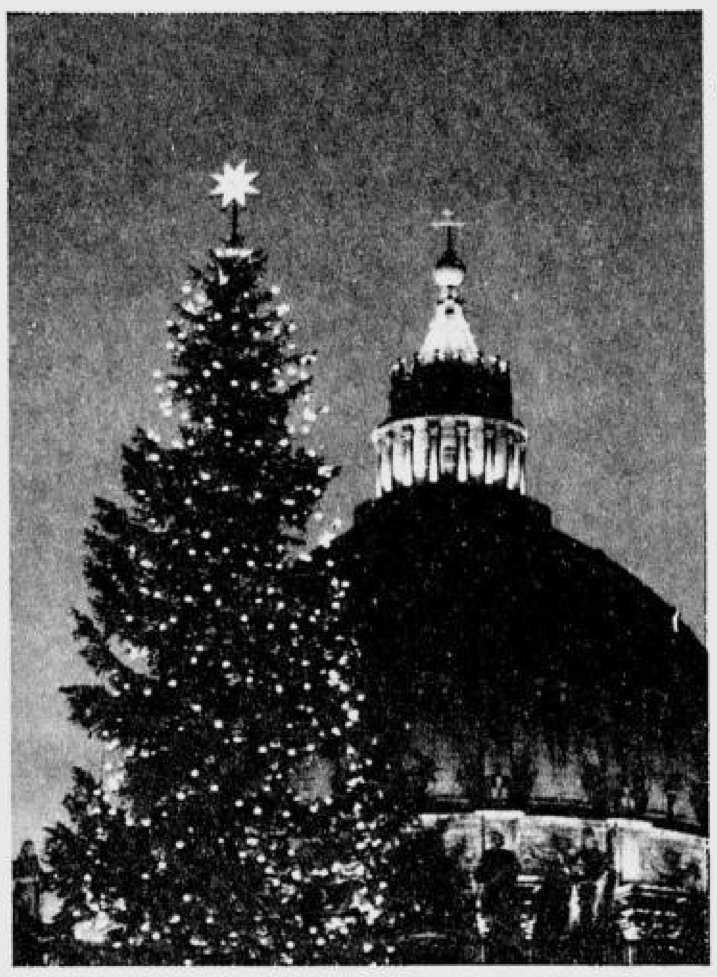
Facing pressure to shift course in the unpopular Iraq war, Bush is weighing the recommendations of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, which called for pulling back US combat troops by early 2008 and engaging Iran and Syria directly over Iraq.

Zawahri urged Sunni fighters to join the so-called Islamic State in Iraq, announced by an al Qaida-led group in October.

"I urge the whole Muslim nation to support this fledgling state as it is, God willing, the gateway for the liberation of Palestine and the revival of the Islamic caliphate.

"I also urge all my mujahideen brothers in Iraq to join this blessed convoy to save the Iraq caliphate from the shackles of the crusaders and their agents, the traitors who have sold their faith," the Egyptian militant said.

Zawahri took a swing at Iraq's Shiite Muslim leaders who he said opposed jihad against US-led forces in Iraq while they saw Lebanese Shiite guerrilla group Hezbollah's war with Israel this summer as sanctioned by Islam. *Reuters*



ONLY DAYS TO GO
A Christmas tree is seen in front of St. Peter's Basilica in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Dec. 20. REUTERS

WORLDBRIEFS

Suicide bomber kills 13 Iraqi recruits

BAGHDAD—A suicide bomber killed 13 Iraqis queuing at a police recruitment center in central Baghdad on Thursday, a medic said, in the latest attack to strike security forces in the war-torn capital. The bomber, wearing an explosive vest, struck at sunrise in a street outside a police academy in the heart of the Iraqi capital that has been barred to vehicular traffic, security officials said. Ten police recruits were killed instantly and another three died of their injuries after being rushed to the al-Kindi hospital, a medical source said. *AFP*

S. Korean scientists plan to clone monkeys

SEOUL—South Korean scientists, undaunted by a scandal over part of the nation's cloning research, said Thursday they now plan to clone a monkey. Chang Kyu-Tae, of the state-funded Korea Research Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology, said his team would next year launch a project to clone a monkey by the end of 2009. "Our cloning technologies are more advanced than other countries. If we have enough funds, we will be able to clone the monkey for the first time in the world," he said. "We should be in a hurry, as our foreign competitors are also working hard on monkey cloning to develop cures for incurable human diseases, despite ethical debate." Chang, 43, said cloned monkeys would also speed up the development of infallible therapies and medicines for human diseases. Scientists say monkeys are closer to human biology than any other animals and would be more reliable in developing new techniques such as gene therapy or growing new organs using stem cells. *AFP*

EU nations settle on new fish catch cuts

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM—European Union fisheries ministers agreed Thursday on tougher catch quotas next year for cod and some other threatened species but sought to give the industry enough fishing opportunities to survive lean times. After negotiations entered a third day early Thursday, the EU nations stopped well short of scientific advice to close some key cod fishing grounds and agreed on cuts which went up to 20 percent. The fishing grounds worst hit were west of Scotland and the Celtic Sea. There were cuts of up to 15 percent cut for the other stocks, EU Fisheries Commissioner Joe Borg said. He promised to set up a drastic revision of a recovery program for cod, which had failed to make an impact over the last three years. "Cod is in bad shape in all (EU) waters," he said. *AP*

Europe to cut emissions

PARIS—IN THE FACE of stiff opposition from the airline industry, the European Union moved forward Wednesday with plans to impose extra charges on foreign and domestic carriers that pollute too much.

"We are showing our determination to fight climate change," said Europe's environment commissioner, Stavros Dimas, who formally announced the proposal in Brussels on Wednesday. "This is one way to persuade other countries to come along with us."

The rules, which would be legally binding, would apply to all flights within the bloc starting in 2011. Foreign carriers landing and taking off from busy airports like those in Frankfurt, Germany; London, and Paris would be obliged to join the system the following year. If enacted, the measure could drive up costs for airlines, potentially leading to higher airfares for travelers.

The proposal draws from the principles of an established system that Europe now uses to help combat global warming and meet emissions goals set forth under the Kyoto Protocol.

Under that plan, which has so far exempted airlines, governments set goals for the carbon dioxide emissions of producers of power, cement, fuels, pulp and paper. If they exceed those goals companies must purchase allocations, or credits.

Many airlines, supported by the US government, are seeking to blunt the European plans, calling them expensive and unworkable. *NYT*

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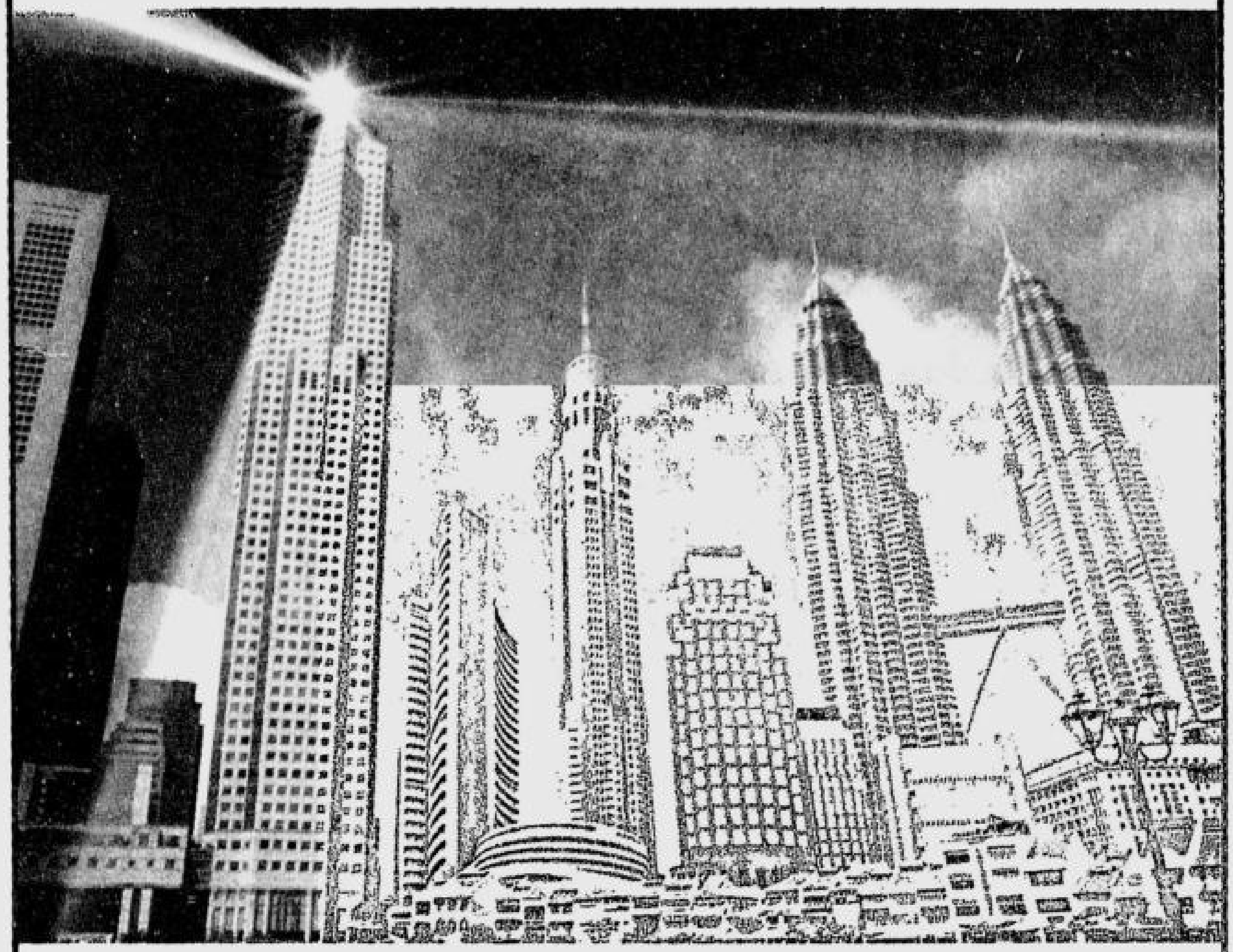

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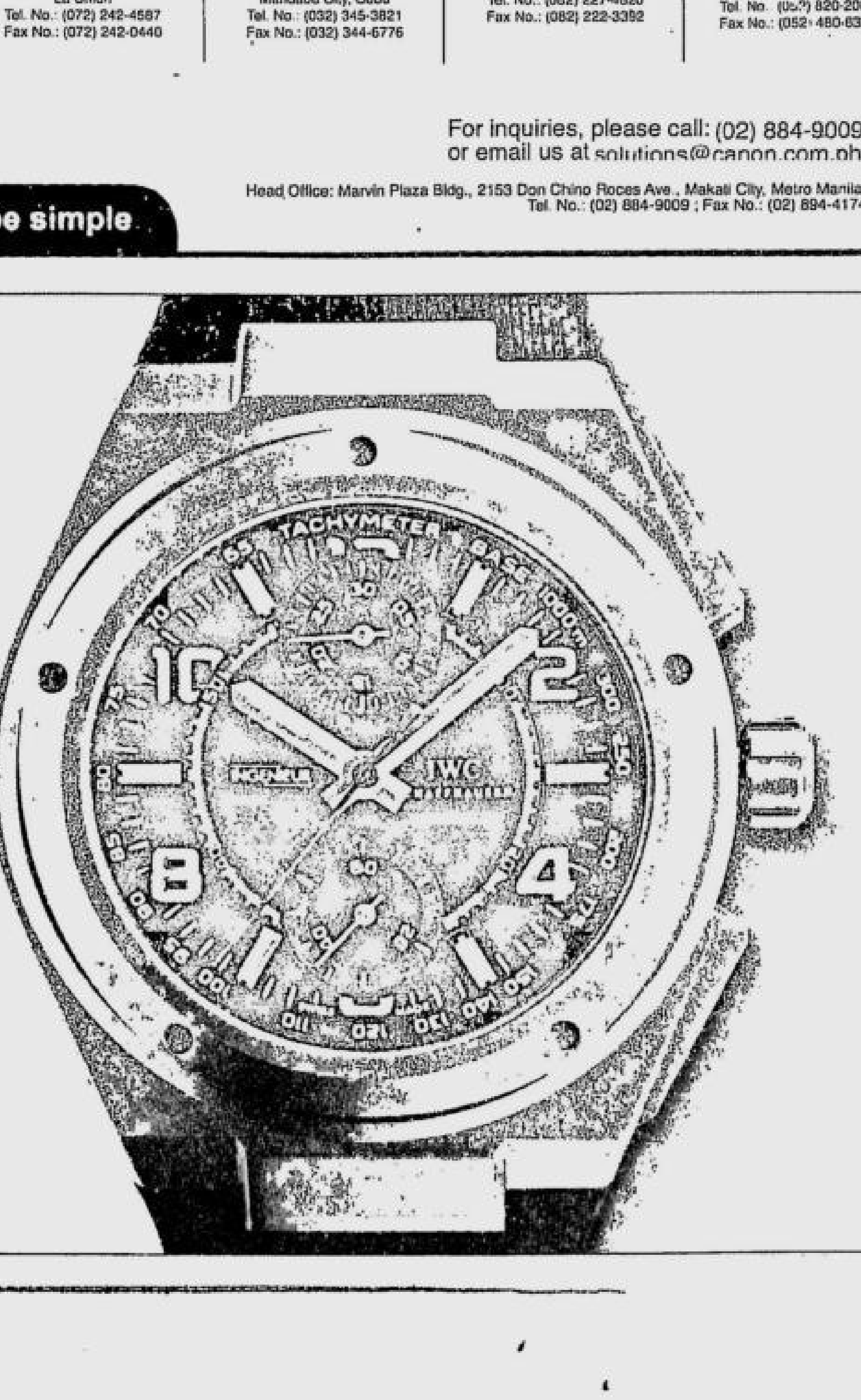


The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Italian at center of euthanasia debate dies

ROME—THE TERMINALLY ILL Italian muscular dystrophy patient at the center of a debate on euthanasia died suddenly on Thursday, Italian media reported.

Only a day earlier, experts said 60-year-old Piergiorgio Welby should continue on life support because his death is not imminent.

Welby, who had been on life support since 1997, wrote an open letter to Italian President Giorgio Napolitano in September asking to be allowed to die, sparking intense debate on euthanasia in predominantly Catholic Italy.

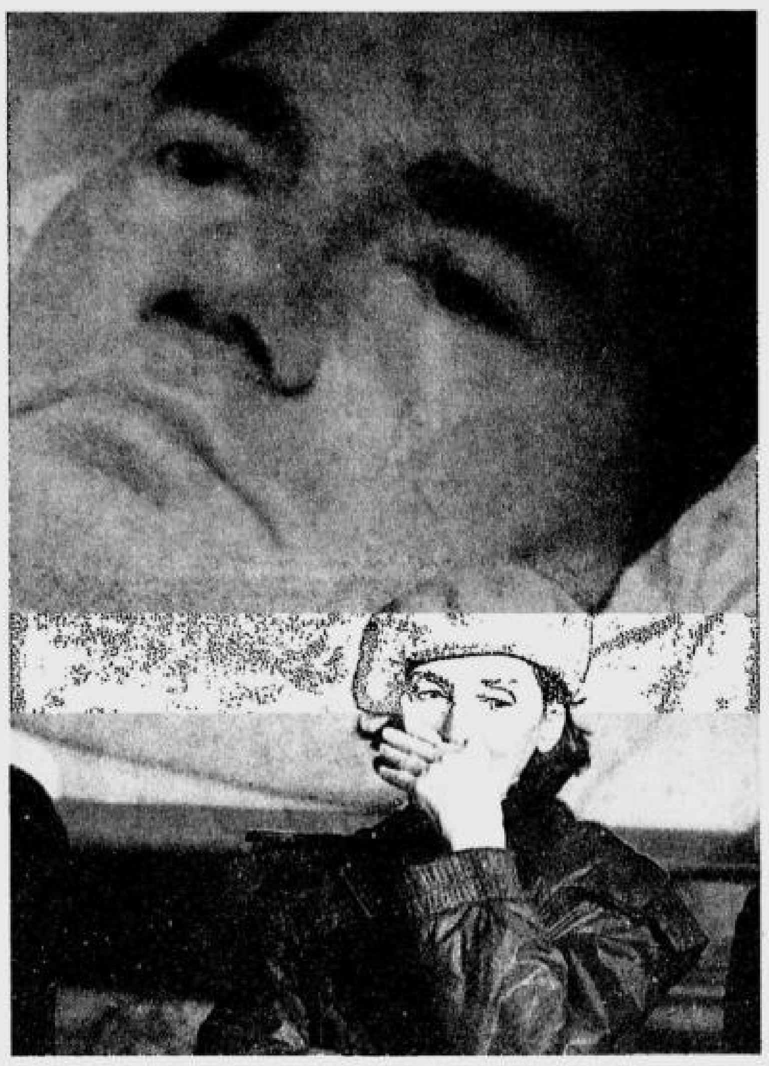
Welby's death was announced on the all-news channel Sky TG24. The radio station of the Italian Radical Party, which had championed Welby's right to die, also carried the news, announced by the party's historic leader Marco Panella.

Rome's state prosecutors on Tuesday challenged a civil court's refusal to recognize Welby's right to go off life support, saying the decision contained "flagrant contradictions," notably by holding that the patient can ask for his respirator to be shut off but that this right cannot be accorded by the courts.

Health Minister Livia Turco said Saturday that the court's decision confirmed "the need to urgently draw up regulations capable of clarifying the judicial framework of what we call sustaining life by artificial means." The Higher Health Council (CSS), a consultative group reporting to the health ministry, said Wednesday: "Treatment for Piergiorgio Welby, in particular the artificial respirator that is keeping him alive, does not constitute excessive care."

It added: "There is no imminent danger to the life" of the patient, who was unable to move anything but his eyes.

Muscular dystrophy is a degenerative genetic disease that progressively wastes muscle tissue. *AFP*



CARLA Welby stands in front of a banner bearing the picture of her brother Piergiorgio during a vigil to show solidarity with Welby, Dec. 16. AP

N. Korea nuke talks explore possible deal

BEIJING—NEGOTIATORS IN BEIJING WERE hoping for progress on Thursday on dismantling North Korea's nuclear weapons program but the North's preoccupation with US financial curbs against it could scuttle a deal.

Washington's envoy to the talks, Christopher Hill, said US and North Korean negotiators were working out how to implement a September, 2005 joint statement that promised aid to North Korea and security assurances in return for nuclear disarmament.

But a South Korean official said the North was refusing to budge without concessions on the US freeze of North Korean accounts at Macau's Banco Delta Asia, which Washington says was a "willing pawn" through which Pyongyang engaged in counterfeiting and money-laundering.

"North Korea is refusing to discuss anything but BDA (Banco Delta Asia)," the official told reporters.

Hill said he was aiming for an agreement by Friday, offering hopes for progress in the talks that group the United States, the two Koreas, Russia, Japan and host China. The negotiations began on Monday, resuming after over a year's break.

They came about 10 weeks after North Korea held its first nuclear test, drawing international condemnation and UN sanctions backed even by China, its chief aid-provider.

"We do believe that there are some elements of that September agreement that should begin to get implemented even this week," Hill told reporters ahead of the fourth day of talks on Thursday. *Reuters*

US gives Sudan deadline on UN force

WASHINGTON—SUDAN MUST allow a team of UN personnel into Darfur and formally accept an international force for the area by the end of the year or face unspecified US steps next year, a US special envoy said on Wednesday.

Andrew Natsios, US President George W. Bush's special envoy for Sudan, told reporters he delivered the message to Sudanese President Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan al-Bashir during a visit to Khartoum this month.

US officials have voiced growing frustration at Sudan's refusal to allow international troops to go to Darfur, where more than 200,000 people have been killed in three years of fighting that the United States says is genocide.

Natsios specifically asked that Sudan allow about 60 UN military and civilian personnel now in Khartoum to go to Darfur and that the government provide its written, detailed agreement for more than 10,000 international troops to deploy as part of a hybrid force of UN and African Union peacekeepers.

While Natsios declined comment on what Washington might do if Sudan fails to act by yearend, the United States and others are considering options from travel bans on Sudanese officials and an assets freeze to imposing a no-fly zone in Darfur.

The Darfur conflict began when mostly non-Arab rebels took up arms in 2003, accusing Khartoum of marginalizing the arid region. *Reuters*

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Turkmen president is dead

ASHGABAT—TURKMENISTAN's authoritarian President Saparmurat Niyazov, who has ruled the gas-rich Central Asian country for 20 years, died early Thursday, two government officials said. He was 66.

"This sad event occurred early this morning. We are all in shock," a senior government official said.

Niyazov had been long rumored to be in poor health, but there was no immediate information about the cause of the reported death.

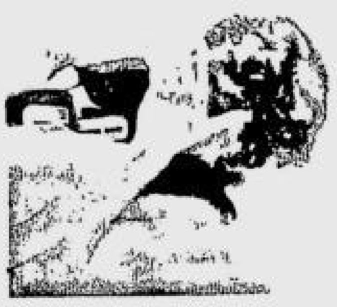
During his reign Niyazov established an overwhelming cult of personality in which he was styled as Turkmenbashi, or Leader of all Turkmen. He allowed no political opposition or free media in this largely desert country of five million people.

Observers say Turkmenistan, a mostly Muslim nation with significant oil and gas resources, faces an uncertain future as there are no clear successors and traditional clan structures in the country have been marginalized.

Two weeks ago state media reported that Niyazov was to undergo an eye operation, but the details of the problem were kept under wraps.

On Oct. 24 a team of seven medical professionals headed by a German heart specialist carried out a regular check on the Turkmen leader and he was declared in good health.

But that month Niyazov issued a rare statement on the subject, saying: "I take medication three times a day because of heart illness." AFP



WHAT'S INSIDE

Sixers lose 12th straight /A28

SPORTS

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Fernando ousts Asiad ace Bibat

By Musong R. Castillo

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA—UNheralded Mark Fernando stunned the most fancied bet in the RP Amateur championship yesterday, ousting Asian Games bronze medalist Michael Bibat with a par on the last hole at the windswept The Country Club here.

The 23-year-old Fernando played the devilish 18th to perfection while Bibat drove left into the rough and needed three shots from there to get on in an unlikely ending to an evenly fought quarterfinal match.

The 1-up win overshadowed the impressive advance of young top seed Tonlits Asistio, the ex-national pool member who churned out a 2-and-1 decision over Rufino Bayron, younger brother of second-ranked Jay, who also marched on.

Jay Bayron outsteadied Asian Games teammate Marvin Dumandan, 2 and 1, after he had bundled out Edmund Jonathan Au, 1-up, in the second round in the morning.

Fernando, a product of the National Caddies' Open program, lost his one-hole lead on the 15th when the tall and well-built Bibat knocked down a 20-foot putt for birdie.

JAY Bayron grimaces after missing a putt on No. 3 against Marvin Dumandan. ERIK ARAZAS

Both battled on even terms before Bibat blinked on the 18th while Fernando took his routine par.

"Maybe it was one of those days when I was the one who was blessed," Fernando, who trains under the auspices of the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation, told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

"That match could have gone either way," added the 23-year-old ex-caddy from Zamboanga who helped Canlubang win the PAL Interclub earlier in the year.

Fernando, who earned sixth seeding in the match play stage, had earlier dumped Taiwanese Cho Tsung-li, 5 and 4, in the round-of-16.

Korean Young Ho-sim claimed the other Final Four slot by scoring a 4-and-3 rout of Ramil Bicierra after eliminating Southwoods mainstay Miko Alejandro, 1-up in 20 holes in the morning.

A foreigner was also left standing in the women's draw with Malaysian Ainil Johani Abu Bakar advancing after a 4-and-2 victory over Melissa Loh Shi Hui of Singapore.

The semifinal round starts today with the Jay Bayron-Fernando match at 7 a.m. followed by the Asistio-Young confrontation eight minutes later.

Abu Bakar clashes with world junior champion Dottie Ardina, a 2-and-1 winner over Crystal Faith Superal, in the 7:16 a.m. pairing, before former RP Ladies winner Carmelette Villaroman squares off with Bambee dela Paz.

Villaroman, the veteran who won the stroke play Philippine Ladies in the late 1990s, posted a 1-up victory in 22 holes over Asian Gamer Anya Tanpinco, while Dela Paz conquered Ting Ting Cao, 2 and 1.

The 36-hole finals will be held tomorrow.

RP AMATEURS
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7 a.m.—Men's s'finals
7:16 a.m.—Ladies semifinals

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Christmas treat up for PBA fans

A SPECIAL TREAT AWAITS PHILIPPINE BASketball Association fans on Christmas Day as the upper box B and general admission sections of the Araneta Coliseum will be free to the public for the final playing day of the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup classification phase.

The Dec. 25 doubleheader features San Miguel against Air21 in the first game and Barangay Ginebra against Talk 'N Text in the mainer.

Gametime is 2:30 p.m.

"This is our treat for the fans on Christmas Day, our way of thanking them for their continued support through all these years," said league commissioner Noli Eala.

To avail themselves of free tickets, fans must bring any proof of purchase of any product of the league's 10 teams or from any retail chains around the Araneta Coliseum.

Bottle caps of Ginebra, San Miguel, Coca-Cola and Red Bull will be accepted.

Redemption centers are located at Farmers Plaza, Ali Mall and Fiesta Carnival. Fans can avail themselves of the promo starting today.

Giants, Realtors gun for q'final slots today

By Musong R. Castillo

DEFENDING CHAMPION PUREfoods starts its hard drive to land in the finals tonight.

The Chunkee Giants clash with Alaska at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, shooting for a win that would assure them of an outright quarterfinal seat in the Talk 'N Text Philippine Cup.

A loss in their 7:20 p.m. encounter with the Aces could dampen the Giants' chances and even drag them all the way down to the wild-card phase.

And even if the Giants do advance, they would have to survive a best-of-five series to make the Final Four.

Sta. Lucia, the leader for most part of the tournament but which lost steam at a key point in this elimination round, also eyes a quarterfinal slot against Coca-Cola at 4:35.

A win would put the Giants and the Realtors in the company of early quarterfinalist Red Bull while dropping idle Talk 'N Text to the wild-card phase in the company of the Tigers, the Aces and the Air21 Express.

Play in the wild-card stage is a single-round elimination with the top team completing the quarterfinal cast.

Sister squads Barangay Ginebra and San Miguel Beer have earlier secured the first two seedings and the two semifinal slots after the Gin Kings waylaid the Red Bull Barako, 94-84, Wednesday.

Those two teams will be awaiting Final Four foes with a break of at least three weeks, counting the seven days from Tuesday next week when the league takes a holiday break.

Purefoods, which earned an automatic semifinal berth in the last two tournaments, and Sta. Lucia have 10-7 cards while the Phone Pals are at 9-8.

But Talk 'N Text still has a built-in advantage in the wild-card phase as it has a two-game edge on Air21.

STANDINGS	W	L
Ginebra	13	4
San Miguel	12	5
Red Bull	11	7
Purefoods	10	7
Sta. Lucia	10	7
Talk 'N Text	9	8
Air21	7	10
Alaska	7	10
Coca-Cola	4	13
Welcoat	3	15

GAMES TODAY

4:35 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Coca-Cola

7:20 p.m.—Purefoods vs Alaska

REY Guevarra shows flair in t

Ramirez sees more funds for athletes

RAMIREZ

By June Navarro

WITH GOVERNMENT funds expected to pour in to boost the coming Olympic campaign, the Philippine Sports Commission can now push its grassroots development program next year.

"Some of the funds intended for elite sports can now be channeled to our grassroots development program to strengthen our search for talents," said PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez yesterday.

Ramirez received a fresh mandate from President Macapagal-Arroyo to spearhead the country's bid for a first Olympic gold in the 2008 Beijing Games following the recent success of the country's Asian Games campaign in Doha, Qatar.

The presidential endorsement meant full government support for the Olympic preparation, which the Asiad team did not enjoy as the PSC had to make do with a budget of P30 million.

Still, the Philippines captured four gold on top of six silver and nine bronze medals to wind up with its best Asiad performance in 44 years.

Ramirez said First Gentleman Mike Arroyo has promised to support the Olympic mission, one that would identify what he termed as "super athletes" from diving, fencing, archery and the combat sports of boxing, taekwondo and karate.

The fencers and divers will be sent to China, the archers and taekwondo-jins to South Korea and the karatekas to Italy. A Cuban coach will again be hired for the boxers, who will fight in several international meets before the Olympics.

"The SEA Games and Asian Games successes could bring in more supporters for our national athletes," said Ramirez, who acted as chef de mission in both the SEAG, which the country hosted last year, and Asian Games in Doha.

SPORTSWATCH

Pacific Supertex bags crown

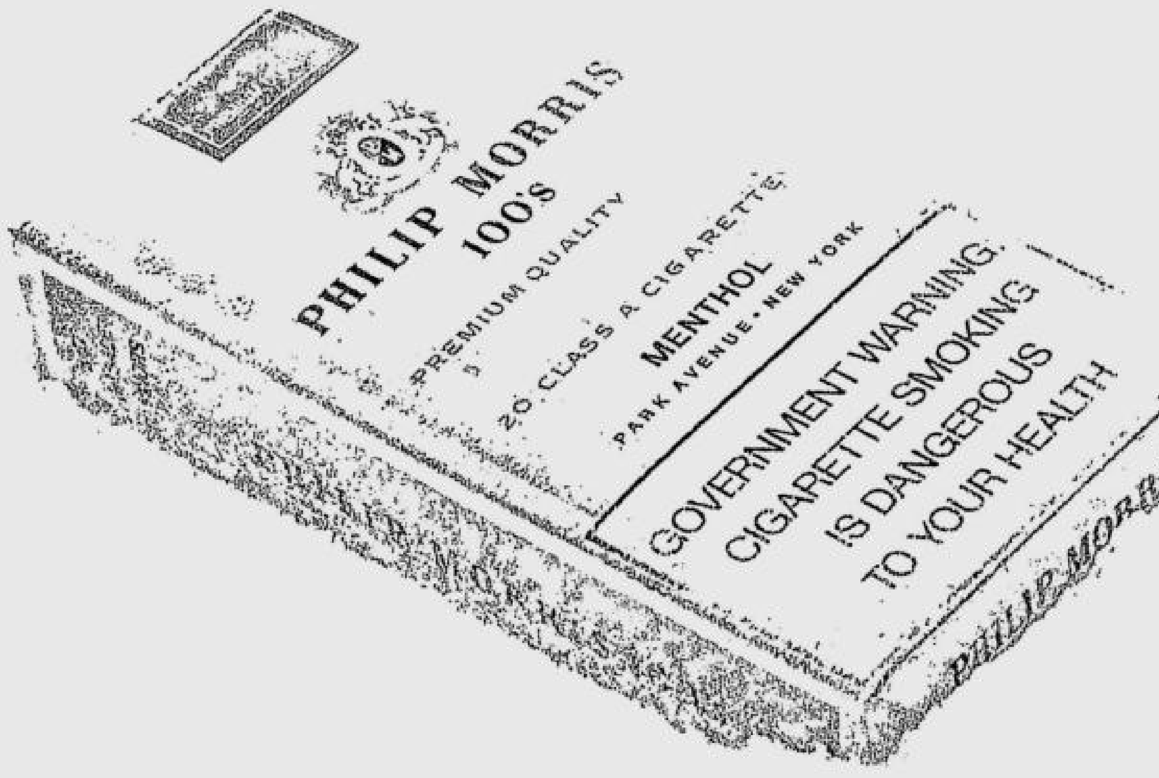
PACIFIC SUPERTEX OUTLASTED CKP168.COM, 84-83, in overtime Sunday to win the MBT Corporate Basketball League at the RTU Gym in Mandaluyong. In the MBT's John O. Women's Cup, Demikk nipped Adamson, 62-60, for the Division A title, the UP Lady Maroons thrashed GNC-Cebu, 73-21, for the Division B crown and the St. Paul Saints beat Lynx, 56-50, for the Division C plum. Pacific Supertex whipped Mighty Filters, 93-87, while CKP 168.com overcame the Philippine Star, 81-76, in the knockout semifinals Saturday. League commissione Nilo C. Fernandez awarded the championship trophy to Pacific Supertex-Kings Bakeshop owners Scott Go and James Cafe. Luis Palaganas of the champion team was named Most Valuable Player. Fernandez said highlights of the championship games will be featured in the final episode of the Metroball Show at 11 p.m. on Dec. 28 on IBC 13. Pol Santiago banged in 25 points and Mark Marcos fired 20 points to pace Pacific Supertex in the title match that was close from the start.

SJC International derby set

PREPARATIONS ARE UNDER WAY FOR THE SECond staging of the SJC International 8-Cock Derby slated Jan, 22, 24 and 26 at the San Juan Coliseum with a whopping guaranteed prize of P6 million at stake. The SJC management said all participants will automatically become co-hosts and will recieve 50 percent of derby proceeds. Backed by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, the derby requires an entry fee of P55,000. According to host R. Pineda, more than 120 local and international cockers will compete, and among the early registrants were Dean Joson and Boy de Roca, co-champions in the 115-entry Christmas Rambulan 6-cock derby last Wednesday.

70 fights in Pasay today

SOME 70 MATCHES ARE ON TAP WHEN THE BIG-time 4-Cock Derby gets going at the Pasay City Cockpit at 5 p.m. today. Hosts Carrie Chua of Laguna and Dandan Tan put up a cash prize of P300,000 for the derby supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. The impressive line-up of participants includes William Go, Tony Lasala, Louie Cua, Eddie Ison, Sam Mendoza, Gov. Ito Ynares, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Boy Royo, Jet and Joel Fernando, Pol Estrellado and Emil Chua. Last Tuesday, veteran cocker Benjie Lim topped the NCA 5-cock derby at the same venue. For inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 or 816-6750.



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Toyota bets shine in PBL Showcase

ERIK ARAZAS

king the slam dunk plum.

By Jasmine W. Payo

TOYOTA OTIS BETS HUMBLED the established league stars in the PBL Showcase last Wednesday at the Olivarez College Sports Center in Parañaque.

Little known guard Rey Guevarra displayed mid-air flair to beat out favorites JC Intal of Harbour Centre and Elmer Espiritu of Mail and More for the slam dunk title.

Patrick Cabahug also bested several veterans to rule the three-point shootout.

Fleet-footed guard Jason Castro of Hapee-PCU averted a Toyota Otis sweep by lording it over the skills competition.

"This proves that the PBL has a lot of talents," league commissioner Chino Trinidad said during the awarding ceremony.

Guevarra clinched the slam dunk title with a one-handed jam after leaping over a standing boy. That earned Guevarra a perfect 50-point mark for a total of 98 in the two-round finals.

"I really trained hard for this act," the 6-foot-2 Guevarra said in Filipino.

An early favorite, Intal could only muster 97 points for second place. The high-leaping forward opened with an impressive 360-degree dunk, but settled for a less flashy two-handed reverse jam in the second round.

Serving as judges were members of the 1986 UAAP champion team Ronnie Magsanoc, Eric Altamirano, Joey Guanio, Jake Mendoza and Joey Mendoza of the University of the Philippines.

In the three-point shootout, Cabahug emerged on top with 19 points. Jeff Chan of Magnolia collected 16 points, while Josh Urbiztondo of Kettle Korn-UST picked up 15.

Cabahug also ruled the elimination round with 17 markers, beating Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala star Ken Bono, TeleTech veterans Ariel Capus and Al Magpayo and Harbour Centre shooter Jonathan Fernandez among others.

Castro also finished first among 10 competitors in the skills competition by beating the 16-second clock by 1.1 seconds.

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'Bantam Ben' laid to rest Dec. 26

ARDA: Legendary

LONG BEFORE BIG Berthas gave golfers added distance off the tee, Ben Arda, diminutive at 5 feet 5, was already considered by many as a pocket rocket in launching golf balls to as far as the eyes can see. He also was a wonder at the fairways and greens, making him a complete player.

Born Benjamin Antonio Arda on June 13, 1929, he started his love affair with the royal game as a caddie. He went on to win three Philippine Open titles in 1961, 1963 and 1979, and had the whole of Asia as his stomping ground in a career that spanned over four decades.

While two other Filipinos had more RP Open victories than Arda, the Cebuano cemented his claim to fame by becoming the first Filipino, in 1970, to top the Asian Golf Circuit's Order of Merit. Larry Montes had 13 RP Open crowns while Celestino Tugot, had six.

Last Dec. 19, Arda died of cardiac arrest at age 77, leaving behind his wife Ludeth Ludivina, and children Baby, Beth, Jun, Virgilio, Mila, Rhea, Clarise and Marriel. He had two other children who passed before him, Virgie and Victor. His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel in Parañaque. Interment is on Dec. 26 at 10 a.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park, also in Parañaque.

Known as the other "Bantam Ben," Arda spent many of his last remaining years tutoring young golfers at the Ayala-Alabang Golf and Country Club.

"Tata Ben will always be fondly remembered by those of us who consider AAGCC our home— golfers, caddies and everyone else," said a young businessman. "He will be sorely missed."

"There will never be another one like Ben. He had so much to share about golf and shared them freely. This early, we are thinking of staging an annual memorial tournament in his honor," said an importer.

One title close to Arda's heart outside of the RP Open was his victory in the Malaysian Open, in which his name was engraved in the Seagrams Trophy.

Likewise, Arda starred in not one but four stints in the made-for-television Shell's Wonderful World of Golf. He was ranged against the likes of Dow Finsterwald in 1966 at the Valley Golf Club, Frank Beard in 1968 at Medinah Country Club in Illinois, and Roberto DeVincenzo and Don Sikes in 1969 at the London Hunt and Country Club in Canada. Later in 1969, he faced off against Billy Casper and Gene Littler at the Manila Country Club.

Truly, it was Arda, installed by the Philippine Sportswriters Association into its Hall of Fame in 2004, who put the Philippines into the world golfing map.

Ozamiz bests Spring for 3rd straight crown

OZAMIZ CITY—OZAMIZ COTTA TIGHTENED its defense in the last five minutes to hold off Spring-Tagaytay, 64-56, and bag an unprecedented third straight title in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament Wednesday at the Gov. Angel Medina Sr. gymnasium here.

After scoring a 73-70 come-from-behind win in Game 1, the Cotta Shrine cagers of Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog fought the Cooking Oil Masters on equal footing in the first quarter before pulling away to sweep the best-of-three series.

Ozamiz silenced Spring-Tagaytay in the final five minutes, with Billy Bansil and Marlon Basco hitting the last eight points to seal the win before the ecstatic Ozamiz fans. Ozamiz won the last two conferences of the tournament.

Basco was named MVP for the second time as he produced the crucial baskets in the endgame.

Basco made the Mythical Five together with teammate Lou Gatumbato, Pagadian's Peter Naron, Spring's Danny Capobres and North Cotabato's Henry Fernandez.

Jeff Tajonera of Spring was chosen Most Improved Player, Montaña Davao's Ryan Abanes earned "Find of the Year" honors and Ozamiz coach Albert Calvo earned his second straight Coach of the Conference award.

"Ozamiz proved it's the best team in the league," said NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla. "This will make the other teams work harder in the off-season as they look forward to a bigger and better season next year."

Padilla co-owns the Cooking Oil Masters with league EVP Mayor Bambol Tolentino.

The scores:

OZAMIZ 64—Cavan 12, Alberto 12, Basco 9, Dacia 9, Liangco 6, Bansil 6, Bat-og 4, Gatumbato 4, Delina 2, Nicdao 0.

SPRING-TAGAYTAY 56—Morante 12, Mallari 10, Epondulan 8, Neo 8, Reyes 7, Capobres 5, Tajonera 2, Yambao 2, Finullar 1, Guiyab 1, Genido 0, Bamson 0.

Quarters: 17-17, 37-31, 52-48, 64-56

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SPORTS

Sixers lose 12th straight

PHILADELPHIA—JERMAINE O'NEAL scored 34 points and grabbed 11 rebounds, and Stephen Jackson had 25 points to lead the Indiana Pacers to a 101-93 win over Philadelphia on Wednesday, the last-place 76ers' 12th straight loss.

O'Neal and Jackson took turns down the stretch making clutch baskets to hold off a spirited Sixers team playing their first game in more than 10 years without Iverson on the roster.

Andre Iguodala and Kyle Korver each scored 20 points for the Sixers, a night after they traded Iverson to Denver for Andre Miller, Joe Smith and two 2007 first-round picks. Iverson was inactive for his final six games in Philadelphia after a bitter split with the franchise that made him the No. 1 overall draft pick in 1996.

Allen Iverson will probably make his Denver debut Friday night at home against Sacramento. The Nuggets postponed their game Wednesday night against Phoenix because of a snowstorm.

No Iverson, and no Chris Webber again, either. Webber missed his third straight game because of a sprained right ankle.

The Sixers, who have lost 19 of 21 overall, are on their longest losing streak since they dropped 13 straight from Dec. 28, 1996, to Jan. 20, 1997. The Sixers also have dropped 10 in a row on the road.

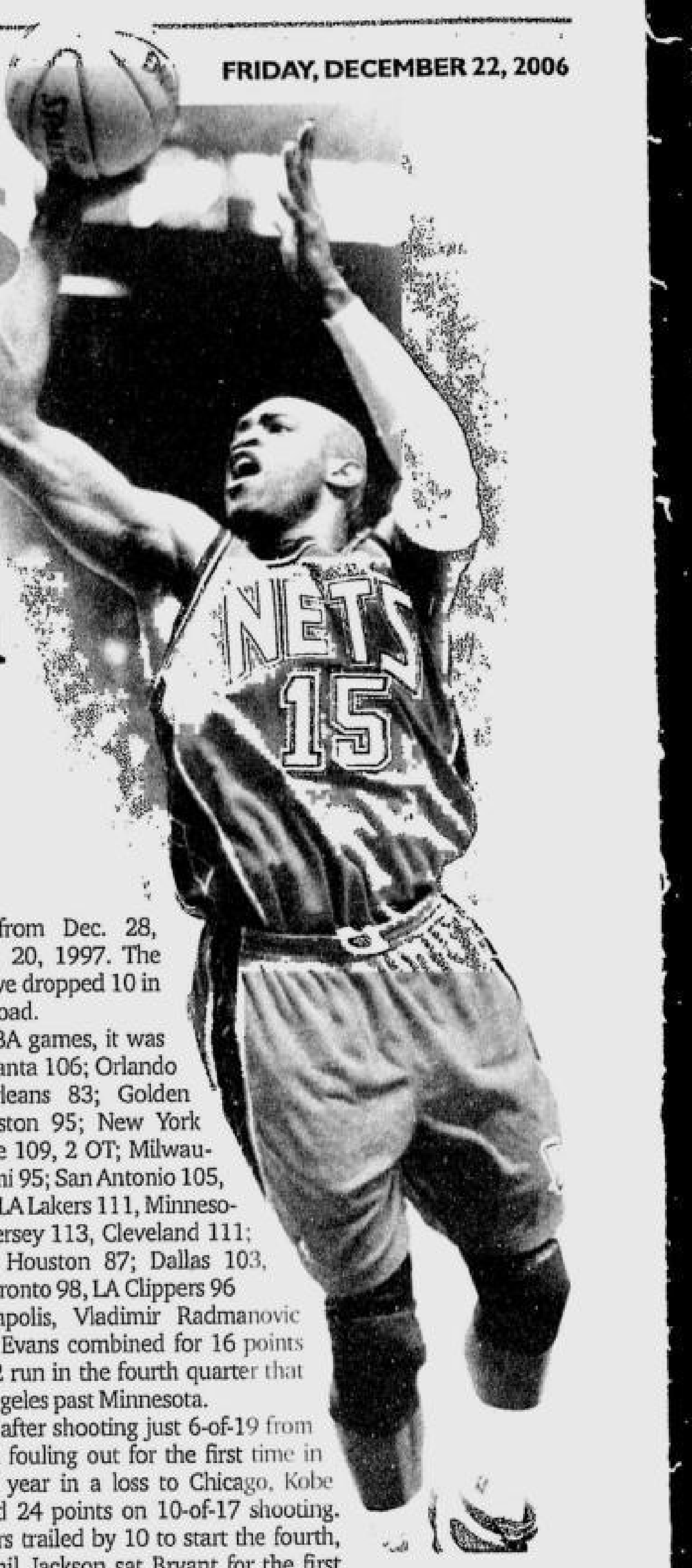
In other NBA games, it was Utah 112, Atlanta 106; Orlando 86, New Orleans 83; Golden State 96, Boston 95; New York 111, Charlotte 109, 2 OT; Milwaukee 121, Miami 95; San Antonio 105, Memphis 98; LA Lakers 111, Minnesota 94; New Jersey 113, Cleveland 111; Portland 89, Houston 87; Dallas 103, Seattle 95; Toronto 98, LA Clippers 96

At Minneapolis, Vladimir Radmanovic and Maurice Evans combined for 16 points during a 25-2 run in the fourth quarter that rallied Los Angeles past Minnesota.

One night after shooting just 6-of-19 from the floor and fouling out for the first time in more than a year in a loss to Chicago, Kobe Bryant scored 24 points on 10-of-17 shooting. But the Lakers trailed by 10 to start the fourth, and coach Phil Jackson sat Bryant for the first 8½ minutes of the quarter.

The Timberwolves, especially Kevin Garnett, were stunned. After shooting 62 percent and playing nearly flawless offensive basketball through three quarters, they were outscored 34-7 in the lowest-scoring fourth quarter in franchise history.

AP



SOARING, FALLING: High-leaping New Jersey Nets swingman Vince Carter (top) elevates to the hoop against the Cleveland Cavaliers. Dirk Nowitzki, on the other hand, falls to the ground holding his ankle against the Seattle Supersonics, raising concern in the Dallas Mavericks camp. AP, REUTERS

Iverson debuts with Nuggets Friday vs streaking Suns

DENVER, COLORADO—ALLEN IVERSON must wait until at least Friday to make his debut for the Denver Nuggets, but he is confident the National Basketball Association's two top scorers can thrive together.

Iverson had planned to arrive here on Thursday for a practice session ahead of Friday's game against Sacramento but a blizzard struck the "Mile-High City" and closed the airport.

The snowstorm also forced postponement of Wednesday's scheduled game here between the Nuggets (14-9) and the Phoenix Suns, whose 15-game win streak is the NBA's best in seven seasons.

The Philadelphia 76ers traded the superstar guard to Denver on Tuesday in a deal that will unite him with Carmelo Anthony, the Nuggets' forward whose 31.6 points a game leads the NBA with Iverson second at 31.2 points a game.

"I don't think it had to end this way, but this is the way it did end," Iverson told The Philadelphia Inquirer. "The organization did what was best for them and the trade was best for me. I just wish them well."

The 76ers are 5-19, having lost 12 games in a row.

"As we continued to lose, I didn't want to be a part of it," Iverson said. "I know we were capable of winning. But we stopped playing the way we were supposed to play and we were losing."

Iverson has not played since scoring 25 points in a loss at Chicago on Dec. 6 as the 76ers spent nearly two weeks trying to complete a trade deal.

"I had already gotten over it being that I sat out as long as I sat out," he said. "I definitely knew this was coming. I definitely felt it was time. After all that losing, everything else was frustrating. It was just time to go."

Anthony was handed a 15-game suspension by the NBA for throwing a punch during a late-game brawl on Saturday night at New York, so he will not return until a Jan. 20 game at Houston.

Until then, Iverson will be the main playmaker for the Nuggets, who will play host to Iverson's former Philadelphia teammates on Jan. 2.

Critics say one basketball will not be enough to satisfy the egos of Iverson and Anthony, but the star guard nicknamed "The Answer" is confident they will co-exist well.

"It'll be great," Iverson said.

AFP

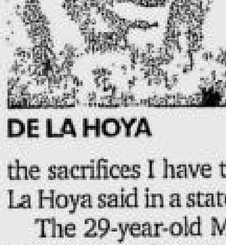
MGM Grand hotel hosts big De La Hoya-Mayweather tiff

LOS ANGELES—THE HIGHLY ANTICIPATED Oscar De La Hoya-Floyd Mayweather Jr. bout that figures to be one of boxing's richest ever will be held at MGM Grand in Las Vegas on May 5.

The designation of the site by Golden Boy Promotions was made Wednesday—five weeks after an announcement saying the pair would meet for De La Hoya's WBC super welterweight title in Las Vegas or Los Angeles.

The live gate could exceed the state of Nevada's record of $18 million, which would better the $16.8 million generated by the Lennox Lewis vs Evander Holyfield rematch in 1999.

The 33-year-old De La Hoya previously said the fight would be the last in a pro career that began after he was the only US boxer to win a gold medal in the 1992 Olympics. De La Hoya, 38-4 with 30 knockouts, is one of boxing's biggest draw despite fighting only sporadically in recent years.


DE LA HOYA

"This is what boxing is all about, and fighting Floyd Mayweather is the type of fight that truly gets me motivated to go through a hard training camp and make the sacrifices I have to make to be the best," De La Hoya said in a statement.

The 29-year-old Mayweather will be moving up in weight class. He is coming off a dominating win over Carlos Baldomir on Nov. 4 for the WBC welterweight title, raising his record to 37-0 with 24 knockouts. He won a bronze medal in the 1996 Olympics.

AP

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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RP exporters to lose US duty-free access

Bush signs law that removes benefits for developing nations

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PHILIPPINE EXPORTERS STAND TO LOSE TRADE BENEFITS from the United States because of recent changes Congress made to the US Generalized System of Preferences program for developing countries, according to the US Trade Representative's office.

Exporters, particularly makers of vehicle wiring harnesses, have expressed their concern over the report that US President George W. Bush on Wednesday signed a law that would remove duty-free benefits for exports under a special program that was meant to aid developing countries.

US trade officials said that the Philippines is one of six countries that would lose duty-free access to the US market for some key exports under the revamped US trade program.

The other countries are Brazil, India, Venezuela, Thailand and the Ivory Coast.

The United States Trade Representative yesterday explained that the Generalized System of Preferences program was being extended for two years until end-2008. This means that duty-free access for all products currently benefiting from the program would continue, except for those that

RP EXPORTERS/ B5

INDICATORS

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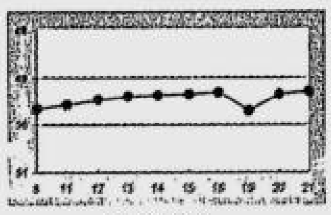

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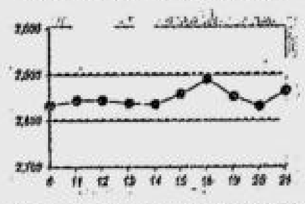


(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close 1.16% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 1.16 percent higher as investors were encouraged by signs of the country's bullish economic prospects, dealers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index closed 32.94 points higher at 2,862.51 points after trading between 2,872.41 to 2,829.45 points.

The broader all-share index was up 20.40 points at 1,799.69.

Gainers outnumbered losers 67 to 35, with 64 stocks unchanged. Volume was 5.5 billion shares valued at P2.543 billion ($51.48 million).

The local currency traded at 49.398 to the dollar.

Dealers said investors were positioning early for further window-dressing toward the end of the year. They also said another factor for the upturn was the slump in oil prices.

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. rose P40 to P2,380.

Manila Electric Co.'s B shares, open to both local and foreign investors, edged up 50 centavos to P54.50, while its A shares, confined to Filipino investors, was steady at P54.

Ayala Corp. was up P20 to P515.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s B shares rose one peso to P74.50, while its A shares held steady at P67. *AFP*

RP may expect FDIs worth $3B in 2007

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES MAY EXPECT AT LEAST $3 billion worth of fresh foreign direct investments to come in next year as the government strives to improve the country's global competitiveness.

The $3 billion in projected FDI commitments for 2007 may even be considered a "conservative" estimate, Trade Secretary Peter Favila said at the sidelines of yesterday's yearend economic briefing held by the government's economic managers.

Favila explained that, based on historical patterns, FDI flows to the country rises by at least 10 percent each year.

Citing a recent study made by a foreign chamber of commerce, Favila said that the Philippines is even capable of attracting as much as $6 billion in FDIs each year.

"Providing an enabling environment is the main factor," he said, noting that mining and infrastructure would be among the sectors that would benefit from the surge in foreign inflows.

Favila added that the export sector had likewise remained vibrant despite the doomsday predictions by some analysts that the electronic sector would succumb to a contraction in global demand.

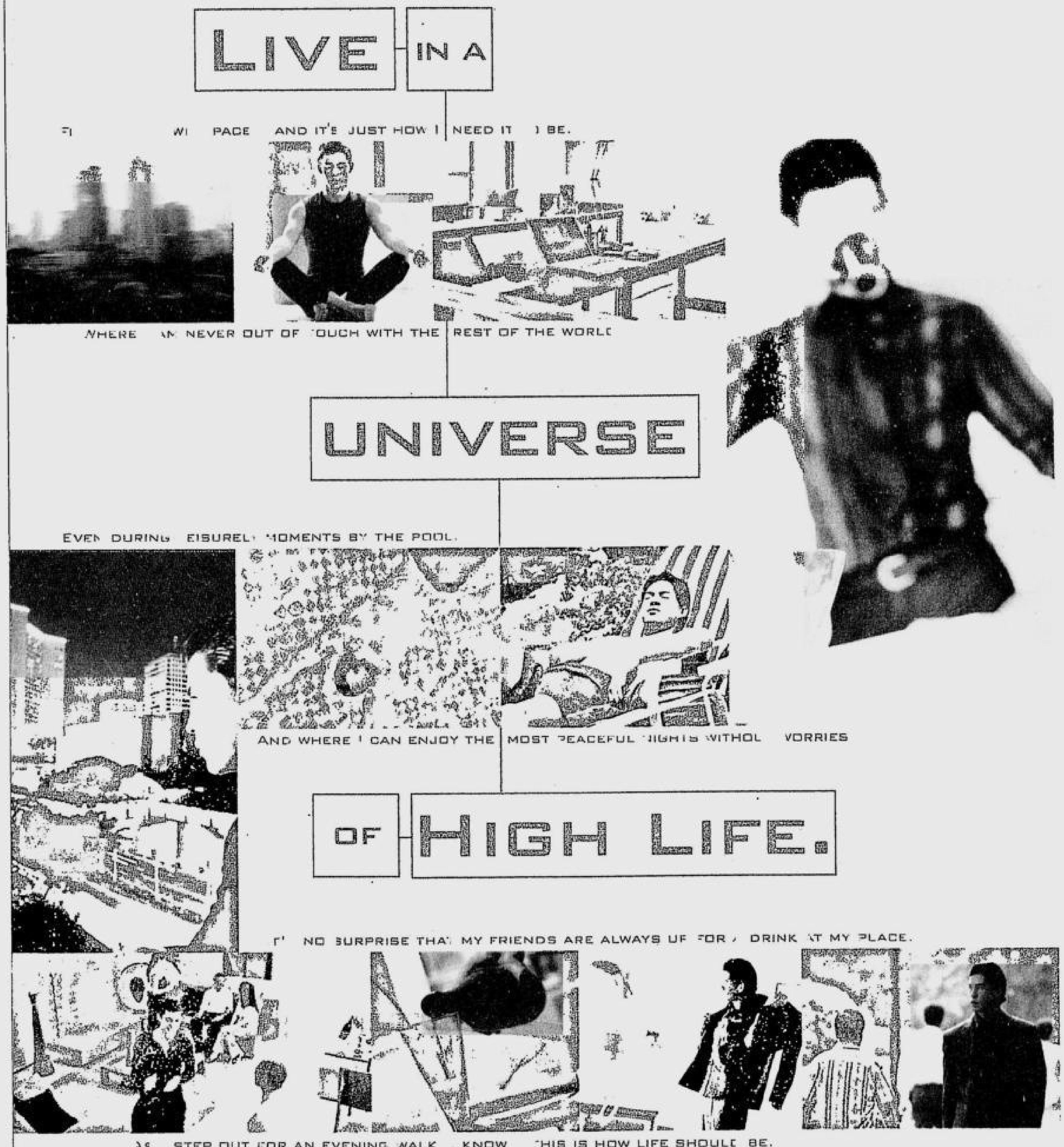
The export sector accounts for about 40 percent of the country's domestic economic output.

The Philippines slipped in the global competitiveness ranking by five notches to 126th out of 175 countries, according to the World Bank group's latest annual survey on ease in doing business.

"Doing Business 2007: How to Reform" is a joint research project of the World Bank and its private sector lending arm International Finance Corp. It indicated that the country did not implement enough reforms to enhance its business climate from 2005 up to April 2006. The country now lags behind Southeast Asian neighbors Thailand (18th), Malaysia (25th), Taiwan (47th) and even Vietnam (104th). Indonesia came in at 135th place.

The Philippines, for its part, has formed a national competitiveness task force to formulate a

RP/ B2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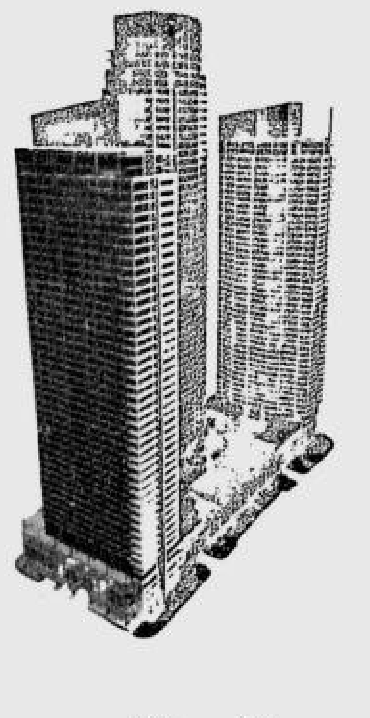

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MPC sells stake in shipping firm

Company owned by Nenaco management taking over

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

METRO PACIFIC CORP. YESTERDAY approved the sale of its 83.7-percent stake in Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) to a newly registered holding firm owned by members of the shipping firm's present management for P5 million.

The buyer, Negros Holdings & Management Corp. NHMC), is owned by members of Nenaco's present management, led by its chair and former Fort Bonifacio Land director Sulficio O. Tagud Jr.

In a disclosure yesterday, MPC corporate information officer David Nugent said MPC would sell a total of 2.53 billion shares in Nenaco. MPC's stake in Nenaco will be reduced to 15.3 percent from 99 percent as it will remain a creditor of the company.

"If and when the buyer realizes any dividends or capital gains on the subject shares in the future, the registrant (MPC) will be entitled to a 50-percent participation. This was a negotiated and mutually agreed consideration, which took into account, among others, the fact that Nenaco is currently under corporate rehabilitation," Nugent said.

Tagud, in the meantime, resigned from the MPC board of directors effective Dec. 18.

Tagud said the new owner intended to push ahead with Nenaco's rehabilitation, which is 60 percent accepted by the shipping firm's creditors.

Nenaco requires roughly $10 million to purchase two new vessels next year under a re-fleeting program. It is selling four vessels this year and is near to closing a deal for the sale of these vessels to Singaporean and American investors, sources said.

Since it filed for rehabilitation in 2004, Nenaco has trimmed its debts down to P1.5 billion from P2.2 billion.

In late 2004, MPC provided P250 million in cash support to Nenaco in order to quicken the implementation of its rehabilitation plan. This enabled Nenaco to repay critical liabilities, invest in necessary safety and maintenance equipment and improve operations. Its nine vessels (seven passenger and two dedicated cargo) have been deployed during peak travel periods.

Nenaco reported a net loss of P235.9 million in the first six months of 2006, up from P5 million in the same period in 2005.

BROADCAST INDUSTRY GOING MOBILE
PLDT and Smart chair Manuel V. Pangilinan views a mobile TV handset during an internal test conducted recently by MediaQuest Holdings and Smart Communications. Mobile TV is increasingly seen as a promising new service for mobile operators and an expansion area for TV broadcasters.

Capmark to acquire MJCI receivables

CAPMARK GROUP USA HAS agreed to buy the receivables of racetrack developer Manila Jockey Club Inc., consisting of its share in a 17-hectare residential project in Carmona, Cavite.

Receivables are current assets that represent an amount due to a company from the sale of goods and services on credit.

Peter Zagala, corporate information officer of the company, said the residential project, known as "Canyon Ranch," was a joint venture between MJCI and Century Communities Corp.

The property is located within MJCI's San Lazaro Leisure Park, a gaming and leisure complex. Based on data from www.capmark.com, Capmark is a leading independent real estate financial company with three core businesses: lending and mortgage banking, investments and funds management, and services. Capmark operates in North America, Europe and Asia.

MJCI officials were not available to give further details about its investor.

Zagala told the PSE, however, that proceeds from the assignment of the receivables would be used by MJCI to further develop its mixed-use commercial, residential, business and retail-lifestyle complex at the old San Lazaro Hippodrome in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

In 2005, MJCI partnered with Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) and its subsidiaries, Avida Land Corp. (ALC) and Community Innovations Inc. (CII) for the development of two prime housing communities dubbed Avida Towers San Lazaro and Celadon Residences San Lazaro in the vicinity.

Avida Towers is a cluster of five condominium towers while Celadon Residences is a 200-unit Mediterranean-inspired townhouse community. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Dec. 19, 2006	Last Week Dec. 12, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.61012	1.59970
Managed Fund - Peso	1.81137	1.80204
Growth Fund - Peso	1.56577	1.55409
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3591	1.3610

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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RP ...

From page B1

multisectoral agenda to shore up the country's ranking from the current bottom third of 175 countries.

In terms of starting a business, for instance, the government has committed to cut the number of days needed to complete the start-up process from 48 to 24, at par with some industrialized countries like Germany and Japan. The number of tax payments will also be trimmed to 26 days from 59.

Meanwhile, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves reiterated the need for the government to spend more on infrastructure to be able to draw in a bigger share of investments pouring into Asia. He said he was hoping that Congress would expedite the process of approving the national budget to resolve the gaps in infrastructure and social spending.

The 2007 public expenditure program prioritizes infrastructure and basic education.

Some P20.9 billion has been earmarked for road-building, P8.3 billion for airport development, P6.4 billion for flood control, P5.5 billion for schools, P4.8 billion to support development in Muslim Mindanao, P3 billion to complete the nautical highway, P2 billion for the procurement of textbooks and instructional materials and P1.1 billion for the rehabilitation of irrigation systems.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 21, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	11,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	46	48.5	45.5	48	1,347,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62	62	61.5	61.5	1,668,100
China Banking Corp.	695	695	690	690	1,650
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	1,420,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	82	85.5	82	85	331,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	50	51	50	51	1,189,800
Philippine National Bank	43	44	43	43.5	50,700
Phil. Savings Bank	48	48	48	48	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	25	26.5	25	26	386,200
Security Bank Corp.	65.5	66	65.5	66	156,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	49.5	49.5	49	49	7,300
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	5.4	5.7	5.3	5.7	362,000
Filipino Fund Inc	4.95	4.95	4.9	4.9	8,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	2,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1650	1650	1650	1650	700
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2080	2105	2080	2100	2,100
Ivantage Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.54	3,983,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	4.55	4.55	4.45	4.5	61,269,000
First Gen Corp.	53	55	53	55	946,300
First Phil Hldgs Corp	61.5	63.5	61.5	63.5	1,373,500
Manila Electric Co. A	54	54.5	54	54	190,900
Manila Electric Co. B	54.5	55	54	54.5	3,144,200
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.5	9.5	9,631,000
Petron Corp.	4.1	4.15	4.1	4.1	3,859,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	310,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	15,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	555,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2	2	2	2	72,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	21	21	21	21	25,000
Jollibee Foods Corp	40.5	42	40.5	42	743,600
Rfm Corp.	1	1	1	1	110,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.75	2.5	2.75	5,899,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	60,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	67	66	67	125,400
San Miguel Corp. B	72	74.5	72	74.5	201,700
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.16	2.18	2.12	2.12	1,557,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.5	18.75	2,182,100
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	1,371,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.05	3.15	4,606,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	2.55	2.7	2.55	2.7	51,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	2,974,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6	6	6	6	10,000
Republic Cement Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	378,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.4	2,277,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	30,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.71	0.74	0.7	0.71	48,630,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.21	0.215	25,180,000
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp	5.1	6.6	5.1	6.6	14,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.45	0.5	0.45	0.5	140,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	19,000,000
Ayala Corp.	505	520	505	515	263,510
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	2,884,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	8	8.2	8	8.2	9,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.0625	0.065	0.06	0.0625	36,900,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	5,000
Apc Group, Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	4,010,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	70,800,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.1	1.06	1.06	2,987,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.35	119,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9.3	9	9.3	39,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.2	2.24	2.2	2.22	6,497,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	2,938,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.6	0.6	50,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	598,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	10	10.25	9.9	10	1,976,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	50,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	50,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	3.95	4	3.9	3.9	69,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.56	1.58	1.54	1.58	1,429,000
Pacifica	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	6,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	150,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	80,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	60,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.16	3,130,000
Sm Investments Corp.	305	307.5	305	305	129,110
South China Resources Inc	1.04	1.08	1.04	1.04	81,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	89,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.33	0.34	0.31	0.32	30,350,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.135	0.12	0.13	360,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	15.25	15.5	15	15.25	5,117,900
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	190,000
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.12	5,278,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.6	1.64	953,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	2,120,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	245,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	231,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	170,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. B	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,860,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54	12,430,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.065	0.07	0.065	0.0675	14,900,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1.98	2	1.98	2	12,743,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.12	0.12	910,000
Highlands Prime Inc	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	25,000
Interport Res.	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	6,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	15,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.47	0.49	0.44	0.48	6,520,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.65	880,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.28	2.34	2.28	2.3	55,045,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	4.9	5	4.85	5	876,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.38	800,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16.25	16.25	15.5	15.5	986,500
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.66	0.68	0.66	0.67	19,150,000
SM Development Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.5	1,000,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc	10	10.25	10	10	6,421,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.12	9,390,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	20.75	20.75	20.5	20.75	30,200
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	50,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.92	9,347,000
Globe Telecom Inc	1235	1240	1235	1240	50,220
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.6	10,861,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2340	2400	2340	2380	128,620
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	2,030,000
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	3,100,000
Ionics Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	132,000
IPVG Corp.	4.25	4.3	4.1	4.1	815,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	1,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.0575	9,500,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	2,000
Transpacific Broadband	4.3	4.45	4	4	3,394,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	60,800,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	150,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	150,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19	19.5	19	19.5	404,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	20,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.36	1.28	1.28	568,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.08	2.12	2.08	2.1	310,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	200,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	28,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	3,720,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	30,000
Ipeople Inc	3.05	3.05	3	3	332,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.12	551,000
Paxys Inc.	19	19	19	19	410,500
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.9	677,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	5.9	6	5.9	6	692,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.012	462,300,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.4	10	9.4	10	3,466,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4	115,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.18	3.15	2.18	3.15	1,895,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	33,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	7,420,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.022	512,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.027	0.025	0.026	150,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.013	3,592,100,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.1	4.15	4.05	4.1	6,802,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.75	19	18.75	18.75	99,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.77	0.79	0.76	0.76	1,690,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.76	1.76	1.68	1.72	6,137,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	770,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	17,800,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	70,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	420,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	10,000
PNOC Exploration Corp.-B	20	23	20	23	1,100
Petroenergy Res. Corp	10	10	10	10	147,000

CURRENCIES

December 21, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.758783	1.000000	49.4220
Japan	Yen	0.006409	0.008446	0.4174
United Kingdom	Pound	1.491312	1.965400	97.1340
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097603	0.128631	6.3572
Switzerland	Franc	0.623333	0.821490	40.5997
Canada	Dollar	0.660443	0.870398	43.0168
Singapore	Dollar	0.493004	0.649730	32.1110
Australia	Dollar	0.596621	0.786287	38.8599
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.012847	2.652731	131.1033
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202337	0.266660	13.1789
Brunei	Dollar	0.491408	0.647626	32.0070
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021030	0.027716	1.3698
UAE	Dirham	0.206601	0.272279	13.4566
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.317900	65.1333
Korea	Won	0.000819	0.001080	0.0534
China	Yuan**	0.097091	0.127956	6.3238
Argentina	Peso	0.248618	0.327654	16.1933
Brazil	Real	0.351940	0.463822	22.9230
Denmark	Kroner	0.134182	0.176838	8.7397
India	Rupee	0.017013	0.022422	1.1081
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.214224	0.282326	13.9531
Mexico	New Peso	0.070102	0.092387	4.5660
New Zealand	Dollar	0.528106	0.695991	34.3973
South Africa	Rand	0.108852	0.143456	7.0899
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023269	0.030666	1.5156

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time Dec. 20, 2006
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian Time Closing Rate as of Dec. 20, 2006

PNOC woos partners for LNG terminal project

State-run firm also looking to invest in gas pipelines

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL CO. is seeking partners from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus China, Japan and Korea (Asean+3) for the construction of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal in Bataan and two natural gas pipeline projects that have been sidelined for several years.

During a regional oil company leadership meeting held in China earlier this month, PNOC officer in charge Pedro Aquino Jr. invited national oil companies in the region to partner with PNOC in undertaking the LNG terminal project and the Batangas-Manila (BatMan-1) and Bataan-Manila (BatMan-2) natural gas pipelines.

PNOC Exploration Corp.'s $100-million BatMan-1 natural gas pipeline project will enable members of the industrial, commercial, transport and residential sectors to tap the natural gas from the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power project in Palawan.

It is also seen to transport Malampaya gas to the decommissioned 850-megawatt Sucat Thermal Power Plant, which President Macapagal Arroyo had earlier wanted to convert to a gas-fired power facility.

Construction of the BatMan-1 pipeline should have started early this year, with completion and operation expected by next year.

Despite the delay, Aquino said it would be good if PNOC could have national oil companies from the Asean+3 participating in these projects, particularly now that a number of them had expressed interest in undertaking projects outside their home countries.

Use ATMs as debit cards, BancNet says

By Doris C. Dumlao

DON'T BRING CASH. INSTEAD, USE automated teller machine cards when shopping in major establishments.

Aristeo Zafra Jr., executive vice president and chief operating officer of BancNet, the country's largest ATM consortium gave this advice for card holders to avoid long queues at ATMs this Christmas season.

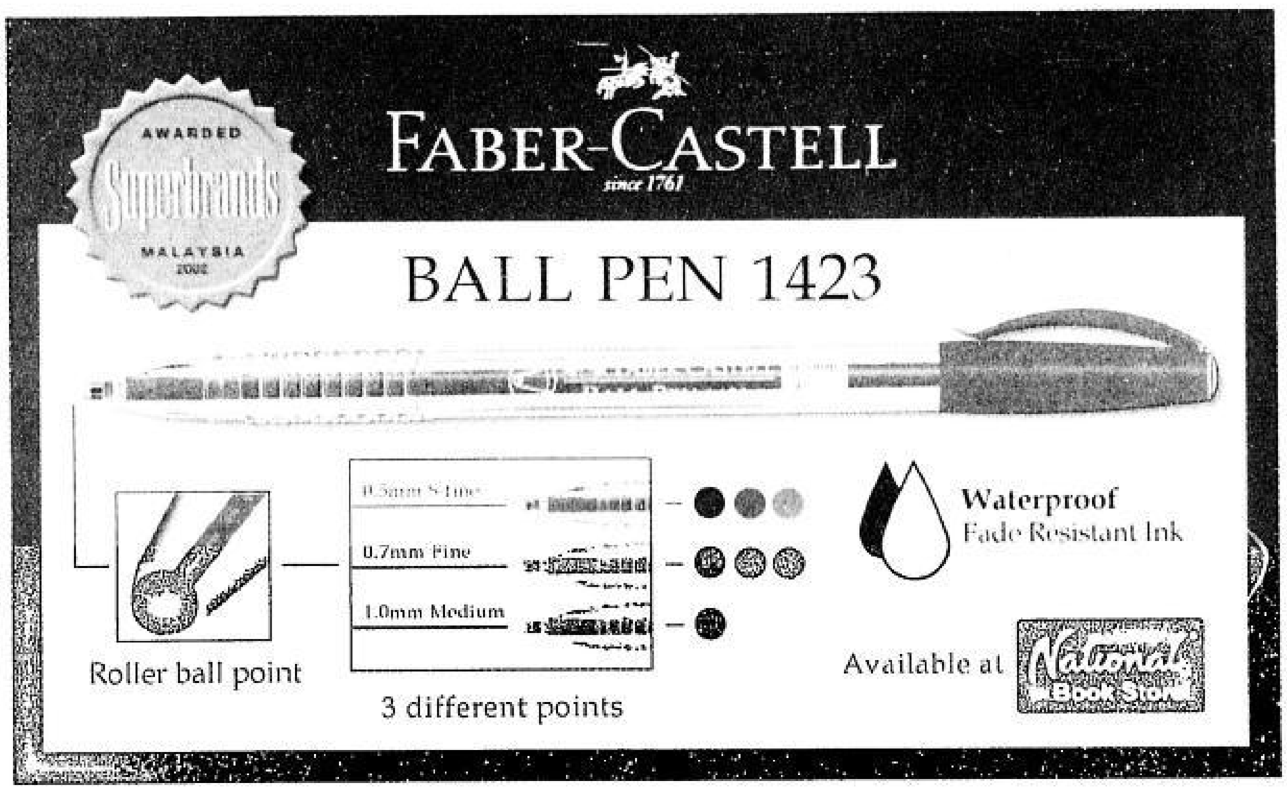
"[By not] carrying big amounts of cash with them, they will not have to worry about pickpockets, who proliferate during the holiday rush," said Zafra, assuring however that member-banks would be ready to meet the record demand for cash.

Based on BancNet data, ATM transactions peak just before major holidays.

This year, BancNet processed the most transactions on Dec. 15 at 849,255.

This was followed by April 12, on Holy Wednesday, just before the start of the four-day long Lenten weekend, at 743,908 transactions.

The third most transactions were recorded on Oct. 28 last year, a Friday and the eve of the long weekend leading to All Saints Day at 734,275 transactions.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HOLIDAY BANKING SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 24, 2006 (SUNDAY)
Open up to 3:00 p.m.:
All SM Mall & SM Dept. Store Branches
Bonifacio Global City
V-Mall
Tutuban
NAIA

DECEMBER 26, 2006 (TUESDAY)
Open up to 4:00 p.m.:
Alabang
Baclaran
Baguio-Legarda
Batangas P. Burgos
Bonifacio Global City
Caloocan
Carmen Planas
CDO-Cogon
Cebu-Elizabeth Mall
Commonwealth
Dagupan
Davao-Rizal
EDSA Cubao
Head Office
Imus Nueño Ave.
Legaspi City
Lipa
Marcos Highway
Marcos Highway-Sta. Lucia
Marikina
Naga
Rizal Avenue
Rockwell
San Pedro
Sto. Domingo
Tabora
Tarlac
V-Mall

Open up to 5:00 p.m.:
All SM Mall & SM Dept. Store Branches

Open up to 6:00 p.m.: NAIA

DECEMBER 30, 2006 (SATURDAY)
Open up to 1:30 p.m.:
Alabang
CDO Cogon
Batangas P. Burgos
Cabanatuan
Carmen Planas
Commonwealth
Dagupan
Davao Monteverde
Echague
EDSA Cubao
Iligan
Imus Nueño Ave.
La Union
Legaspi City
Lipa
Marcos Highway
Marikina
Naga-General Luna
Rizal Avenue
San Pedro
Sto. Cristo-Commercio
Tacloban
Tarlac

Open up to 4:00 p.m.:
All SM Mall & SM Dept. Store Branches
Bonifacio Global City
Baclaran
Cebu-Elizabeth Mall
Head Office
Marcos Highway-Sta. Lucia
Rockwell
Tutuban
V-Mall

Open up to 6:00 p.m.: NAIA

DECEMBER 31, 2006 (SUNDAY)
Open up to 3:00 p.m.:
All SM Mall & SM Dept. Store Branches
Bonifacio Global City
NAIA
V-Mall

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$1-B Nonoc mines deal on brink of collapse

Philnico now ready to entertain 'other suitors'

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE $1-BILLION DEAL TO REVIVE ONE OF Asia's largest nickel mines is on the brink of collapse after disagreements over valuation and share ownership prompted would-be Chinese investors to seek more time to review their offer.

At the same time, the Philnico Industrial Corp., which owns the mothballed nickel refinery and mining operations, said it had begun entertaining other prospective suitors for the project in Nonoc Island off Surigao City.

"We are open to other options and we have received several offers from Japanese companies," Philnico president Evaristo Narvaez Jr. said in a press briefing.

Narvaez said Philnico had also received queries on the project from Russian and other Chinese firms.

"Our main concern is to protect the interests of our stakeholders, which is not only the stockholders of the company but also the interests of the country, the government, and the local community," Narvaez said.

Yesterday's press conference was prompted by statements made by Socioeconomic Planning Sec. Romulo Neri on Wednesday, criticizing Philnico for stalling the deal.

Neri said the firm diverged with the bargaining position of Jinchuan Nonferrous Metals Corp., which is China's largest nickel mining group.

One sticky point is a disagreement over how much Philnico's $300-million obligation to the government would be worth once these are converted into shares in the rehabilitated firm.

On top of this, Neri said Philnico was also "asking for more and more concessions" and "more payment."

The Philnico chief countered this by saying that his group was less concerned over the valuation issues than by the conflicting signals sent by Jinchuan with its decision to commission yet another feasibility study for the Nonoc mines.

The decision, made by the Chinese firm recently, called for a new feasibility study to evaluate the project's financial and technical viability. It will be handled by a Chinese engineering firm and is expected to be completed by May 2007.

"They have been involved with this project for four years already," Narvaez said. "They've even sent their people there. Why call for a feasibility study only now?"

He said the decision to reevaluate Nonoc mines' viability comes after Jinchuan had already offered the government a 15-percent stake in the rehabilitated firm and $45 million upfront payment in exchange for its $300-million claim against Philnico.

"It doesn't sound rational to make an offer, and then support it with a study afterwards," he said.

Banks get relief from BSP rule on securities booking

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS is set to offer banks a temporary relief from stiff restrictions on the stockpiling of foreign-denominated sovereign bonds.

This is to allow them to prepare for the scheduled imposition of tougher capital adequacy requirements.

Under a draft circular, the BSP would exempt for a limited period the foreign currency-denominated Philippine government (ROPs) and BSP bonds kept by banks for the long haul from a "tainting" provision of Circular 476.

The order, issued in February 2005, requires financial institutions to classify their outstanding investments in debt and equity securities based on their intention in purchasing and holding the securities. This makes it difficult for banks to shuffle the securities from one account to another, or liquidate them for speculative activities.

The held-to-maturity or HTM portfolio is considered "tainted" when a financial institution sells a significant amount of these securities prior to maturity for reasons not considered permissible under the BSP regulations.

Banks with "tainted" HTM portfolio are required to reclassify the remaining securities in this portfolio to available-for-sale (AFS) securities, which are required to be marked-to-market. Booking securities under the AFS account is more expensive because of the provisioning requirements linked to market volatility.

The "tainted" banks are also prohibited from using the HTM account during the reporting period. However, only the outstanding HTM securities as of the effectivity date would be covered by the exemption, which is effective for 30 calendar days after the circular's effectivity.

Asean and the voiceless stakeholders

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

LAST DEC. 7-8, AT THE SAME time that the much publicized businessman's conference on Asean was being held in Cebu, a parallel Alyansa Agrikultura-sponsored conference was being held in Quezon City. It included the Alyansa's 42 federations and organizations nationwide, representing all major sectors in agriculture and fisheries. In Asean, this sector has been practically voiceless.

Former Sen. Wigberto Tañada of the Fair Trade Alliance said at the conference: "The processes of information sharing and consultation on regional integration with all the stakeholders are glaringly lacking if not absent despite the grand declaration that Asean is building a community of caring and sharing societies… Real integration can only happen if there is integration at the grassroots level, if people in the 10 Asean countries begin to understand that they are Asean citizens and that they have the right to be heard."

Asean's importance

Asean has approximately 550 million people and produces an annual regional gross domestic product of $1 trillion. It is a rapidly growing region surrounded by the dragon economies of Japan, Korea, China and India, with Australia and New Zealand to its south. Japan has proposed that Asean be made the core of a bigger East Asia Free Trade Area (Eafta), composed of the 10 Asean countries and these dragon economies. Eafta will then have a collective GDP that will be much larger than that of North America and the European Union (EU).

However, the Asean, though formed almost 40 years ago in 1967, is only now formulating a comprehensive charter for approval by the Asean leaders in Cebu next month. Much of this is premised on the rapid economic liberalization exemplified by the Asean Free Trade Area—Common Effective Preferential Tariff (Afta-CEPT), which reduces tariffs to 0 to 5 percent in the next few years. Agriculture has been prioritized with an accelerated target date of 2010 instead of 2015, which some disadvantaged commodity sectors severely oppose.

We must first realize that there are different levels of development and readiness among Asean countries. Also, they largely compete with, rather than complement, one another in trade. Thirdly, within individual Asean countries, there is much unevenness.

Tañada states: "Social scientists in Indonesia, Indochina, the Philippines and Thailand have extensive documentation on how liberalization and globalization benefited only a few… These processes of globalization and liberalization marginalized many others, and those not benefited were the small farmers, communal fisherfolk, small and micro enterprises with no global linkages, domestic industries producing for the home market, indigenous peoples who do not comprehend the meaning of tradable and exportable, workers displaced by privatization and corporate restructuring, and many others who have no sustainable jobs or business niches under globalization and economic liberalization."

Asean structure

It is these stakeholders that are practically voiceless in the current Asean organizational structure. Two important groups that the leaders respond to are the Asean Economic Ministers (AEM) and the Asean Business Advisory Council (Abac). Farmer and fisherfolk interests are not addressed adequately by either group.

As Agriculture Undersecretary Fred Serrano says: "AEM should give the agriculture ministers the same important role that the agriculture ministers have in WTO." For example, during the last Asean talks in Cebu, the DA played a very insignificant role. The agriculture secretary was not even scheduled to be there.

In Abac, the farmers and the fisherfolk voice is hardly heard. It is fortunate that Abac chair Jose Concepcion has agreed to take up the Alyansa's concerns, but this is not institutionalized in the structure. It is therefore recommended that in addition to the agricultural minister being an integral part of AEM meetings, a farmer and fisherfolk representative should either be a part of Abac, or of a new Asean Civil Society Advisory Council (Acsac) that will parallel the Abac. Only then will the great bulk of Asean stakeholders get a voice in Asean.

Recommendations

Key recommendations, rather than just motherhood statements, emerged from the Alyansa's Dec. 7-8 Asean conference. One was that the Asean should remain solid in protecting the gains won by the G-30 (Group of 30 developing nations), led by Indonesia and the Philippines, in last year's WTO ministerial conference.

If the European Union can be solid, so should Asean. This means that Malaysia and Thailand should clarify their unity with the rest of the Asean in fighting for the newly approved WTO categories of Special Products and Special Safeguard Measures, which were placed in doubt a few months ago. Both provisions ensure that important agricultural products can get protection when justified.

These same provisions should be implemented within the Afta- CEPT framework. Gregorio San Diego, president of the United Broiler Raisers Association, said at the conference: "Unless government provides the necessary mechanisms, poultry should be a special product and not be subjected to 0 to 5 percent tariffs by 2010, or we will perish."

Only when stakeholders like these find a voice in Asean through an organizational structure change can we look forward to a truly progressive Asean community.

(The author is Agriwatch chair. For questions and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-852-2112)

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

DEPUTATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE, AND OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES FOR THE PURPOSE OF ENSURING FREE, ORDERLY, HONEST, PEACEFUL AND CREDIBLE CONDUCT OF THE MAY 14, 2007 SYNCHRONIZED NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.
x- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -x

PRESENT:

ABALOS, Benjamin S.,	Chairman
BORRA Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino A. Jr.,	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.,	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.,	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.,	Commissioner

Promulgated : 20 December 2006

RESOLUTION NO. 7788

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other election laws the Commission on Elections may deputize law enforcement agencies and instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine National Police and exercise direct supervision and control over such agencies required by law to perform duties relative to the conduct of the elections;

WHEREAS, there is a need to deputize, with the concurrence of the President of the Philippines, such law enforcement agencies and instrumentalities of the government, including the Philippine National Police and to prescribe their duties and functions to ensure the holding of free, orderly, honest, peaceful and credible national and local elections on May 14, 2007;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission on Elections, by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other related election laws, has **RESOLVED** to deputize, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to deputize the following law enforcement agencies and instrumentalities of the government, to perform specific duties relative to the conduct of the elections, as follows:

1. THE NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION AND THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE

The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government, National Police Commission and its Commissioners, the Philippine National Police and its Director General, are hereby deputized in connection with the May 14, 2007 national and local elections, and as such, shall:

1. Effect no changes, during the election period from January 14, 2007 to June 13, 2007, in the assignments of regional, provincial, city and station unit commanders and all PNP personnel under his command without the prior written permission of the Commission;
2. Direct the officers and enlisted personnel under his command to strictly observe the following duties and functions:
    a. Provide security to polling places, the members of the boards of election inspectors and the voters whenever the need arises therefore, or whenever the Commission through the Election Officer so requires;
    b. Provide security to COMELEC personnel and representatives performing duties and functions in connection with the elections whenever a request to this effect is made or when required by the Commission;
    c. Take steps to protect voters from threats, intimidation, coercion, harassment or reprisal;
    d. Enforce the following prohibited acts under Section 261 of the Omnibus Election Code:
        i. Paragraph (m) on appointment or use of special policemen, special agents, confidential agents or the like;
        ii. Paragraph (p) on possession of deadly weapons;
        iii. Paragraph (q) on carrying of firearms outside residence or place of business;
        iv. Paragraph (r) on the use of armored land vehicles, water or air-craft;
        v. Paragraph (s), as amended by Section 32 of Republic Act No. 7166, on wearing of uniforms and bearing of arms;
        vi. Paragraph (t), as amended by Section 33 of Republic Act No. 7166, on policemen and provincial guards acting as bodyguards or security guards;
        vii. Paragraph (u) on reaction, strike forces or similar forces; and
        viii. Ban on dispensing, selling and taking of intoxicating liquor.
    e. Take effective measures to prevent members of civilian vigilante units and barangay tanods from engaging in partisan political activities or any act of terrorism, intimidation, coercion, harassment or reprisal;
    f. Take steps to prevent private security agencies from acting as private armies of any candidate or as campaigners for terroristic or violent acts against persons in connection with the May 14, 2007 national and local elections;
    g. Implement strictly the rules and regulations promulgated by the Commission in provinces, cities, municipalities and barangays which may be placed under COMELEC control;
    h. Enforce specific orders of the Commission to confiscate or tear down prohibited election propaganda or advertisement;
    i. Perform such other functions and duties or implement such other directives as the Commission may issue from time to time; and
    i. Render periodic reports on actions taken in accordance with this deputation.

2. THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

The National Bureau of Investigation, its Director and all agents under him are designated deputies for purposes of the May 14, 2007 national and local elections and, upon prior order from the Commission:

1. Deploy its agents to designated places in order to effectively carry out the objective of this resolution, furnishing the Commission with a list of said agents;
2. Direct its agents to arrest any person who violates the provisions of the Omnibus Election Code and other pertinent election laws and the Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Commission;
3. Report from time to time to the Commission actions taken by him or his agents pursuant to this resolution; and
4. Comply with the orders and directives of the Commission, which shall be given priority over orders and directives from other sources, except the Supreme Court and those issued in *habeas corpus* proceedings.

3. THE BUREAU OF JAIL MANAGEMENT AND PENOLOGY

The Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and its Director, are hereby designated deputies of the Commission to enforce the following provision of the Omnibus Election Code:

> "SEC. 261 (n). Illegal release of prisoners before and after election. The Director of the Bureau of Prisons, any provincial warden, the keeper of the jail or the person or persons required by law to keep prisoners in their custody who illegally orders or allows any prisoner detained in the national penitentiary, or the provincial, city or municipal jail to leave the premises thereof sixty days before and thirty days after the election. The municipal or city warden, the provincial warden, the keeper of the jail or the person or persons required by law to keep prisoners in their custody shall post in three conspicuous public places a list of the prisoners or detention prisoners under their care. Detention prisoners must be categorized as such."

and to comply with all orders, directives and resolutions, which the Commission may from time to time, promulgate.

PRECEDENCE OF COMELEC ORDERS

Orders issued by the Commission in connection with the May 14, 2007 national and local elections shall take precedence over and above the orders and directives issued by any other office or agency of the Government.

However, nothing contained herein shall be construed as in any manner affecting or constituting an impairment of the Constitutional powers of the President of the Philippines to conduct the direct the general peace-keeping functions of the Philippine National Police.

EFFECTIVITY

This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh (7th) day following its publication in at least two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines

DISSEMINATION

The Executive Director shall furnish copies of this resolution to all the above deputized officials and/or departments, offices, or agencies, through their respective heads, the Regional Election Directors, the Provincial Election Supervisors and Election Officers / Officers-In-Charge, and coordinate with the above-named departments, offices or agencies for effective implementation thereof.

The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this Resolution in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, and disseminate this resolution for the information of the public.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI – December 22, 2006)

Unilever plans to put up new deodorant manufacturing plant

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

UNILEVER PHILIPPINES PLANS TO PUT up a new deodorant manufacturing facility in Paco, Manila that will strengthen its foothold in the export market.

Outgoing Unilever chief executive Howard Belton said in a briefing yesterday that the plant, expected to become operational by the third quarter of next year, would produce mainly roll-on deodorants, of which more than half would be sent abroad, particularly to the United States.

Belton declined to provide details on the capacity and cost of the manufacturing plant, but said that it would allow Unilever Philippines to export three times as many deodorants once it starts operations.

Unilever Philippines currently exports 60 million deodorant sticks a year and about 10 million roll-ons.

Unilever Philippines is the biggest exporter of deodorants in the Unilever network, with products manufactured here sent to other parts of Asia, as well as the United States, North Africa and Europe.

The Philippines is also set to penetrate the Australian market.

"Our intention is to be able to sell all formats of deodorants, from mini-sticks to sticks, roll-ons and sprays," Belton said.

He said the Philippines was able to corner a big portion of deodorant exports because Filipinos have shown their competitive edge in producing products that are more difficult to manufacture, such as deodorants.

He added that the plants here were more flexible, which means that the Philippines can quickly introduce new variants of deodorants compared to plants in other countries.

"The Philippines is also competitive in this market because of the good relationships with clients," Belton said.

Aside from increased production, Belton said the new facility would enable Unilever to increase local content of the manufactured goods, from the current 10 percent.

Local plastics producers, he said, were becoming more competitive, meeting Unilever production standards.

"We are preparing the Philippines to become a truly global supplier of deodorants," he said.

Use of old budget spoils RP growth

Tight government spending stopped economy from growing as it should

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ECONOMY WOULD HAVE GROWN BY 5.6 percent this year and could easily meet the full-year growth target if only the government were allowed to operate using the 2006 expenditure program instead of functioning with a reenacted 2005 budget, the National Economic and Development Authority said.

Augusto Santos, Neda deputy director general, said that with the old budget program, the government was prevented from spending as much as it needed, as stated under the supposed 2006 expenditure program. Tight government spending in turn prevented the economy from growing as it should.

The economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), grew by 5.4 percent in January to September from a year ago. This was still short of the government's full-year target of 5.5 percent.

The government, therefore, needs to grow by 5.7 percent in the fourth quarter to attain the full-year GDP growth target of 5.5 percent.

GDP is the value of all goods and services produced in an economy in a given period.

Economic managers said they were hoping Congress would be able to pass the proposed national budget for 2007 so that the needed expenditures would be realized this time.

The Senate and the Lower House, however, failed to consolidate their versions of the budget early this week. Economic managers are crossing their fingers, hoping that the legislators will be able to pass the budget program early next year.

The government has set an economic growth target of at least 5.7 percent for 2007. Santos said that in setting the target, the economic managers have assumed that the proposed budget for next year would be approved.

Finance Undersecretary Gil Beltran said a reenacted budget would slash the expected GDP growth by 0.5 to 1 percentage point.

"The 2007 budget contains significant and quality investments in social services and infrastructure that will help us achieve higher and sustainable economic growth and improve our people's lives," the economic managers yesterday said in a joint statement during their year-end economic briefing held at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

RP exporters . . .

From page B1

exceeded new thresholds set under the new law.

The US is one of the advanced economies that implements a GSP, aimed at creating trade with, and economic opportunities for, developing countries. As of end-October, the US has brought in $27.2 billion worth of products, or 1.8 percent of its total imports through the GSP program.

Among those affected are Philippine exporters of wiring harnesses, which have benefited from the law over the last five years. According to the USTR, a product is eligible for special access to the US market subject to two "competitive need limitations."

The CNL bars special access for a product of a certain country if the yearly trade of this product exceeds a certain level—for 2006, the threshold is $125 million. Also, goods are barred if the yearly trade of a product from a particular country reaches more than half the total US imports of that product.

Still, the current law allows the US President to grant a waiver to the CNLs if certain statutory conditions were met.

Ramon Vicente T. Kabigting, director of the Bureau of International Trade Relations, said Philippine exports of wiring harnesses has always exceeded that thresholds.

"(This sector) has also been enjoying waivers for the past five years," Kabigting said.

Unfortunately, the new law provides that the White House should "revoke any existing CNL waiver that has been in effect for at least five years if a GSP-eligible product from a certain country has a trade level that exceeds 150 percent of a yearly trade cap or comprises 75 percent of of US imports of that product."

Available USTR data—which covers the January to October period—show that imports of Philippine wiring harness had reached $329 million.

With a report from Reuters

PREMYO SA RESIBO
PAGCOR

Congratulations to the
10 new Millionaires!

Winners will be awarded their checks by Secretary of Finance Gary B. Teves

December 20, 2006
Ten MILLIONAIRES
PREMYO SA RESIBO

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000023669624 000025078463
000019111621 000019282388
000030241207 000027440558
000024714835 000020785333

philweb

Twenty P100,000 Consolation Prize winners:

000027342906 000023349153 000021906074 000025511531 000028447235
000019826725 000026255421 000027595061 000024375922 000023570695
000023086711 000022302260 000027440404 000030306723 000029001192
000020996694 000019075952 000019140588 000026259118 000022094562

The next Premyo Sa Resibo draw will be on January 19, 2007.
For this draw, Official Receipts from Dec. 1, 2006 to January 18, 2007 are qualified.

Premyo Sa Resibo Instructions :
Type-in the text message in this format:
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INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Friday, December 22, 2006

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				PBA				Big News	PBA					Sentro	Real Stories		Araw-Araw Premyo Sa Resibo	Simbang Gabi
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Inocente De Ti	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Bet The Vandel Buster	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo (8:15 PM)		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Alias (Season V)		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		The 4400		Ultimate Guinness World Records	E Buzz	Kung Fu Hustle				Canon Mega Box Office With 400D Viewer's Choice	
bTV		TV Shopping		NBA: Wizards @ Kings					NBA Home Video		B-Ballography: O Robertson	Overtime Olajuwon	FIBA World Basketball	60 Greatest Playoff Moment	NBA: Wizards @ Kings				
Cartoon Network																	Aqua Teen Hunger Force		
Cinema One		Nagbabagang Luha				Blue Moon				Videoke King				Ikaw Ang Mahal Ko				Bahid	
Cinemax			Harper (3:20 PM)			The Shadow (5:15 PM)				Bloodsport				Mobsters				Interview With The Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Profiler		City Confidential		Law and Order		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Without A Trace		The Unit	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Extreme Machines		Power Zone		How Do They Do It	Man Machines	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It	Man Machines	Science Of Star Wars		Crime Scene Psychics	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Power Hour		Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Video	Buzz On Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Atlantic Coast Conf: Gonzaga Vs Duke				Women's Golf Lexus Cup 06 1st rd						Golf Programming	English Premier League Preview	Sportscenter Asia	Atlantic Coast Conf: Gonzaga Vs Duke				Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars Season 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood Season 2		Beach Girls		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (Degeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Makita Ka Lang Muli	Kapuso Movie Festival				Ghost Fighter	Jewel In The Palace		24 Oras	Captain Barbell	Atlantika	StarStruck: The Next Level	Bakekang	A Rosy Life (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang		Saksi	
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Just Cause		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Family Law		Midsomer Murders				Regenesis	
HBO			The Brooke Ellison Story			Real Women Have Curves			New On The Big Screen In Dec	Mad City				Christmas With The Kranks				Kicking And Screaming	
Hero TV	Di-Gata Defenders	Sunny Pig	Inuyasha II	Mirmo de Pon	Saiyuki Reload	Naruto	Monkey Turn	Gundam Seed Destiny	Full Metal Panic	Galaxy Angels	Votes V Evolution	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Astroboy	Three-Eyed One	Naruto	Raijin-Oh	Di-Gata Defenders	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	New Life Shopping Network		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweat	X-Play	Hoot		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hates Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Sweet Dreams	Rachel Ray		Smart Solutions	DIY Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Martha		Clean House		Rachel Ray		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines		MTV Hits	VH1 Fabulous Life: World's Most Fantabulous Rides		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	Moto. Gwen Stefani Videography	MTV Diyes		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News	Homecoming	VH1 Fabulous Life: 10 Hottest Celeb	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Secrets Unveiled				Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials		WOW!		Top Gun Week		Oasis			
NBN					Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Ting Ng Bayan		Teledyaryo Final Edition		World Pool Championship					
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubuyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Asian Anime Fest: Avatar: The Legend of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Catscratch	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Dark Oracle	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Dama				Ambon Sa Pisngi Ng Dagat				Mandurugas				Maharot				Gloria Labandera
Qtv	Pawnshop No. 8	Samurai X	Hikaru No Go	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Extranatural
RPN 9	TV Shopping	Mundo	Popeye & Son	Chinese Movie	Mr. Fighting	RPN Aksyon Balita		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepherds Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports	Golf Today	World's Greatest Auto Show		FIVB Finals: Russia vs. Brazil				Billiards: US 9 Ball		Sagupaan	AutoExtreme	Ultimate Fighter		Nopi Tunervision	Wide Side	Sportsdesk		Spanish League: Deportivo vs Racing	
Star Movies			Secret Lives (3:45 PM)			Raising Helen (5:15 PM)				Submerged (7:15 PM)				American Pie 2			Baywatch Hawaiian Wedding		
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desire: Table For Three		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		Desire: Table For Three		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXilog
UnTV				KNC Show	Kakampi Mo Ang Batas		Kaka at Claire Kaagapay N'yo		Public Hearing	Make My Day		Ang Dating Daan (8:15 PM)							

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

Office of the President

NOTICE OF SALE

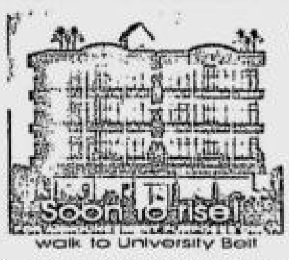
Please be informed that the following properties of the Home Guaranty Corporation are being offered for public bidding:

	PROPERTY LOCATION	TYPE	FLOOR AREA	LOT AREA	SELLING PRICE	REMARKS
1	Lot 12 no. 205-G Gen. Luis St., Brgy. Onse, San Juan, Metro Manila	House & Lot	96	82	1,335,400.00	illegaly occupied
2	Blk 3 Lot 3-D, Libya St., Marikina Greenheights, Marikina City	House & Lot	25	40	231,000.00	illegaly occupied
3	B25 L15, BF Martinville, Las Piñas City	Lot only		513	903,100.00	illegaly occupied
4	B25 L13, BF Martinville, Las Piñas City	Lot only		512	901,120.00	illegaly occupied
5	B24 L19, BF Martinville, Las Piñas City	Lot only		495	980,100.00	illegaly occupied
6	B10 L4, BF Martinville, Las Piñas City	Lot only		698	2,887,300.00	illegaly occupied
7	B77 L13, Antipolo Hills, Bo. San Luis, Antipolo City	House & Lot	67.9	120	398,200.00	illegaly occupied
8	B20 L4 Cherry Homes Subd., Brgy. Mambog 1&2, Bacoor, Cavite	House & Lot	78	85.5	1,015,300.00	illegaly occupied
9	B17 L5 Potassium St, Goldenville Subd., Brgy. Sabang, Dasmariñas, Cavite	House & Lot	65	70	359,700.00	illegaly occupied
10	B4 L9 Galaxy St. Armstrong Village, Brgy. Paliparan, Dasmariñas, Cavite	House & Lot	24	38	121,000.00	illegaly occupied
11	B14 L29, West Employees Subdivision, Gulang-gulang, Lucena City	House & Lot	36	180	559,350.00	illegaly occupied
12	B8 L42, Molave Road, Acacia Parkhomes, Brgy. Saimsim, Calamba, Laguna	House & Lot	79	65	360,492.00	illegaly occupied
13	B7 L26, Ipil-ipil Road, Acacia Parkhomes, Brgy. Saimsim, Calamba, Laguna	House & Lot	70	65	328,460.00	illegaly occupied
14	B12 L1, Gumamela cor. Rose St., Malinoville Subd., Brgy. Panipuan, San Fernando City, Pampanga	Lot only		120	264,000.00	Vacant
15	B12 L 3, Rose St., Malinoville Subd., Brgy. Panipuan, San Fernando City, Pampanga	Lot only		120	264,000.00	Vacant
16	B1 L4, Road Lot 1, Dela Paz Village., Brgy. Dela Paz, San Fernando City, Pampanga	Lot only		100	154,000.00	Vacant
17	B1 L5, Road Lot 1, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		177	97,350.00	Vacant
18	B1 L6, Road Lot 1, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		177	97,350.00	Vacant
19	B6 L43, Road Lot 5, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		170	74,800.00	Vacant
20	B6 L44, Road Lot 5, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		170	74,800.00	Vacant
21	B6 L46, Road Lot 5, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		170	74,800.00	Vacant
22	B6 L55, Road Lot 5, Karenville Subd., Brgy. Maquiapo, Guagua, Pampanga	Lot only		164	72,160.00	Vacant
23	B1 L18, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
24	B2 L7, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
25	B2 L9, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
26	B2 L13, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
27	B2 L14, Road Lot 3, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
28	B2 L15, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
29	B2 L17, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
30	B2 L23, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
31	B2 L25, Road Lot 2, Country Homes II Subd., Brgy. Sto. Niño (formerly Prado Saba), Lubao, Pampanga	Lot only		210	184,800.00	Vacant
32	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-6, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		449	395,120.00	Vacant
33	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-7, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		448	394,240.00	Vacant
34	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-8, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		449	395,120.00	Vacant
35	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-9, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		467	410,960.00	Vacant
36	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-10, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		669	588,720.00	Vacant
37	Lot 3014-B-1-I-3-C-1-A-11, Brgy. Road, Bacolor, Pampanga	Lot only		574	505,120.00	Vacant
38	B1 L7, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
39	B1 L8, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
40	B1 L9, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
41	B1 L10, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
42	B1 L11, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
43	B1 L12, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		251	110,440.00	Vacant
44	B1 L13, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		265	116,600.00	Vacant
45	B1 L15, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
46	B1 L16, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
47	B2 L1, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		279	122,760.00	Vacant
48	B2 L2, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		254	111,760.00	Vacant
49	B2 L4, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		251	110,440.00	Vacant
50	B2 L5, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
51	B3 L4, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
52	B3 L6, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		200	88,000.00	Vacant
53	B3 L9, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		218	95,920.00	Vacant
54	B3 L10, E.S. Subdivision (formerly site of ALCO Feeds), Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Porac, Pampanga	Lot only		250	110,000.00	Vacant
55	B2L9, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
56	B2L12, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
57	B2L29, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
58	B2L30, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
59	B2L34, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
60	B2L36, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
61	B2L38, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
62	B2L39, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
63	B2L13, Road Lot 1, ASC Ville 2000 Subdivision, Brgy. Bical, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija	Lot only		150	198,000.00	Vacant
64	Lot 12798-C-3-B-1-F, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		368	182,600.00	Vacant
65	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-A, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		365	180,400.00	Vacant
66	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-E, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
67	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-G-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
68	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-G-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
69	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-H-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
70	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-H-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
71	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-I-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
72	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-I-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
73	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-K-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
74	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-K-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
75	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-L-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
76	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-L-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
77	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-M, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
78	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-O, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
79	Lot 12798-C-3-C-3-Q, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
80	Lot 12798-C-3-C-2-L, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
81	Lot 12798-C-3-C-2-K, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		300	148,500.00	Vacant
82	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-C-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
83	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-C-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
84	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-E-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
85	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-E-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
86	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-I-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
87	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-G-1, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
88	Lot 12798-C-3-C-1-I-2, Joyceville Subdivision, Brgy. Malacampa, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		150	74,800.00	Vacant
89	Lot 11990-A-2, Sitio Malasin, Sta. Maria, Camiling, Tarlac	Lot only		500	165,000.00	Vacant
90	Lot 3, Pcs-036906-004355, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		223	123,200.00	Vacant
91	Lot 4 Blk 6 Psd-124052, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		300	165,000.00	Vacant
92	Lot 6 Blk 6 Psd-124052, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		300	165,000.00	Vacant
93	Lot 19, Pcs-036906-004355, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		158	95,700.00	Vacant
94	Lot 20, Pcs-036906-004355, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		156	94,600.00	Vacant
95	Lot 1, Pcs-036906-004347, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		240	132,000.00	Vacant
96	Lot 7, Pcs-036906-004348, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		227	125,400.00	Vacant
97	Lot 2, Pcs-036906-004357, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		227	125,400.00	Vacant
98	Lot 4, Pcs-036906-004357, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		268	147,400.00	Vacant
99	Lot 5, Pcs-036906-004356, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		224	123,200.00	Vacant
100	Lot 5, Pcs-036906-004356, EMF Subd., Pada-Pada, Gerona, Tarlac	Lot only		205	112,200.00	Vacant

FOR INTERESTED PARTIES, PLEASE CALL HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION AT 896-04-25, 897-31-49 OR VISIT OUR HEAD OFFICE AT JADE BLDG. NO. 335 SEN. GIL PUYAT AVENUE, MAKATI CITY

(SGD) RAFAEL P. DE LOS SANTOS
OIC-VICE PRESIDENT
PROJECT MANAGEMENT/ACQUIRED
ASSETS DISPOSITION GROUP

(PDI-Dec 22, 2006)



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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 2006-021-g

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF TWENTY-FOUR (24) UNITS OF TIME AND ATTENDANCE RECORDING SYSTEM AND SECURITY ACCESS CONTROL

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2006 and continuing appropriation of 2007, intends to apply the sum of **PhP 5,280,000.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Procurement of Twenty-four (24) Units of Time and Attendance Recording System and Security Access Control. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the said procurement with the following specifications:

TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION

The Specifications of the Twenty-four (24) units of Time and Attendance Recording System and Security Access Control shall be the following:

- The Time and Attendance Recording System and Security Access Control must support fast 10/100 base-T Ethernet TCP/IP networking with the ability to network with central server and use both on system or on server processing/ database;
- Customized metal protective casing;
- Built-in Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) – minimum 30 minutes back-up time;
- Bar Code Slot Reader must support smart card, Wiegand, magnetic stripe proximity and bar code to speed up queuing time. Bar Code Reader must be able to read 1-dimensional (1D) and 2-dimensional (2D) Bar Code Format,
- Support for lock output and door access monitoring;
- 5K template storage memory (standard and expandable);
- Audio Alarm;
- Battery level charge indicator for UPS:
- Must be based on proven optical fingerprinting scanning technology with 3D Live finger detection with verification in the typical – 1 Second Range;
- Display – 2 line of up to 16 characters,
- Transaction Storage - 10,000 transactions buffered;
- The scanner must be tested with wet fingers, greasy fingers, smeared fingers and oily fingers to give consistent performance for most practical situations;
- Installation of the new biometric Bundy clocks in the server and configuration of these units for strict compatibility with the existing units and currently running Time Monitoring System for the PhilHealth Central Office. The Cost of installation such as airfare, accommodation and the likes should be shouldered by the winning bidder,
- Installation/Configuration of the new biometric Bundy clocks/Server/Time Monitoring System per Office in the PhilHealth Regional Offices shall be undertaken by the winning bidder. The Cost of installation such as airfare, accommodation and the likes should be shouldered by the winning bidder;
- Detailed Design and System Documentation;
- User and Technical Manuals:
- The winning bidder must provide technical trainings, free of charge and must provide in-depth technical trainings for PhilHealth Systems Engineers who will provide support for the new equipments. The trainings shall focus on the technology being used by the equipment and its applications and must include hands-on exercise/s,
- The winning bidder should include the training on the Software/Hardware installation, configuration and maintenance; and
- Implementation charges such as network cabling, materials and installation and one (1) day training for the accompanying software per office including the transportation, board and lodging shall be shouldered by the winning bidder and shall likewise be a part of the contract price.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino Citizens/Sole Proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws of regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino Citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to the technical and financial requirements. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who would be determined as such after the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC)** in the Central Office of PhilHealth Room 1107 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from **8:30 a.m.** to **4:00 p.m.**

A complete set of Bidding Documents should be purchased by interested Bidders from **December 22, 2006 to January 5, 2007** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **PhP 15,000.00** cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **January 8, 2007 at 10:30 a.m.** at the **OSBAC Conference Room** (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th floor Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the **OSBAC Conference Room** on or before **January 22, 2007, 10:30 a.m.** The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the **OSBAC Conference Room**. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on January 22, 2007, 10:30 a.m. at the OSBAC Conference Room. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

CY 2004 to CY 2005 is the relevant period for contracts which will be required to be submitted by PhilHealth.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office
MR. JOSEPH O. VERGARA
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre
709 Shaw Blvd, Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 locals 1128, 1130 and 1830
e-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735
www.philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) Atty. VALENTIN C. GUANIO
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services

(PDI - Dec. 22, 2006)

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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES OFFICE
CENRO-WEST, Lantawan
Pasonanca, Zamboanga City

LEASE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Notice is hereby given that the CENRO-WEST, Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City will Lease to the highest bidder at 10:00 A.M. on March 15, 2007, the tract of land covered by Miscellaneous Lease Application No. 097332-21 of Concepcion L. Balaguer

Location : Calarian, Zamboanga City
Description : MLI 0973322-000021
Area : 5,390 square meters
Appraised value of the land : Php 1,078,000.00
Total appraised value of the property : Php 14,552,483.04

All bids must be sealed and submitted to the Office of the CENR-WEST, at Lantawan, Pasonanca, Zamboanga City on or before the hour and date stated above and plainly "Bid for the Land described in MLI 097332-21." Bids must be accompanied with cash money order, treasury warrant, certified check, cashier's check for a sum equivalent to ten percentum (10%) of the bid. When a bid is withdrawn after the highest bidder is determined, the corresponding deposit thereof shall be forfeited to the government. No bid shall be less than the appraised value of the land. This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

(Sgd.) TITO L. GADON

(PDI-Dec. 22, 29, 2006; Jan. 5, 12, 19 & 26, 2007)

Pag-IBIG wins ARAW Values Award

THE PAG-IBIG FUND GRABBED A BRONZE trophy for its "Tapat sa Pag-IBIG" campaign during the recent awarding ceremony for the 2006 ARAW Values Advertising Awards (AVA).

Pag-IBIG was recognized in the multimedia campaign category under Branded Communications. The other finalists in the same category were ABS-CBN, Philippine National Bank and Global Brands, Inc.

The Fund launched its print and radio campaign in 2005 drawing on the Filipino values of loyalty and honor to urge employers to remit their employees' contributions, and borrowers to pay their loan amortizations religiously.

Pag-IBIG has increased its total collections from P26.98 billion in 2000 to P47.38 billion in 2005.

Lawyer Romero Quimbo, president and CEO of the Pag-IBIG Fund, said that the award "is a welcome bonus for us, on top of attaining our campaign's objective of raising awareness about every member's important role as a stakeholder in the Fund."

"This latest recognition is an affirmation of our efforts to explore every avenue to promote the Fund's growth and improve its services," he stated.

Last October, the Pag-IBIG Fund received the Scroll of Honour Award from the UN-Habitat for its accomplishments in providing affordable homes to hundreds thousands of families.

The AVA is a biennial awards program of the Advertising Board of the Philippines and Advertising Foundation of the Philippines honoring outstanding works in the advertising industry that help promote and communicate Filipino values.

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Tel. (632) 922-3757 / 922-2969 * Fax (632) 921-2887

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(2nd Invitation)

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	Contract No. MWTP-1
Location	MWSS Complex, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Brief Description	Supply and delivery of two (2) units Mobile (Trailer-Mounted) Water Treatment Plant
Production Capacity	Max. 4,000 liters/hour
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Php 30 Million (Php 15 Million/unit)
Contract Duration	150 calendar days
Delivery Period	within 150 calendar days

The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR). Only bids from bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Ground Floor, Engineering Bldg.
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara
Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the above address upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **P2,500.00** starting **December 19, 2006** in the form of cash or Manager's Check payable to MWSS. Prospective Bidders, who have previously registered with MWSS and bought the Bidding Documents during the first failed bidding, need not buy a new set of Document. However, it shall be required that for the said Bidders to be allowed to bid, they must submit a Letter of Intent to participate in this bidding not later than the date of the Pre-bid conference.

MWSS will hold a **Pre-bid Conference** open to all interested Bidders on **December 28, 2006, 9:30 a.m.** at the Sr. Deputy Administrator's Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the above address on or before **2:00 p.m.** on **January 12, 2007**. The official timer for purposes of determining the official time shall be that of the clock located at the conference Room of the Sr. Deputy Administrator. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.

Form of Security	Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)

Bid opening shall be at **2:30 p.m.** on **January 12, 2007** at the above mentioned address, in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who may choose to attend

The MWSS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **MACRA A. CRUZ**
Sr. Deputy Administrator &
BAC Chairperson

(PDI - Dec. 15 & 22, 2006)

ONE HOUR RELEASE
1% CAR LOAN
accepts 1992-2007 model
Pay-off Past Due w/ Bank
UNITED TREE LENDING
Q.C. 4112547 to 48
Pasig 6567685
Manda 5315577

BUY * SELL * PAWN
WATCHES
JEWELRY
DIAMONDS
BEST OFFER IN TOWN
8342886
8040484

PROFESSIONAL & CREDIBLE
PAWN*BUY*SELL
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Jewelry & Diamonds
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Agencia de Makati
Tel# 889-7956

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (02) 454-0254 • Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with Republic Act 9184, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **January 16, 2007** at **10:00 a.m.** at the SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION (SRA) SOCIAL HALL, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, to all interested rice suppliers for the supply of **500,000 MT, 10% MOLSO** long grain white rice, 25% brokens, Well-Milled, in fifty (50) kilograms net each in polypropylene bags suitable for rice export with NFA markings to be loaded in bulk carrier/s with an appropriated budget from corporate resources of **Php 8.37 B**. Containerized shipment is not allowed. Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, India, Australia and/or U.S.A. Maximum quantity to be awarded for India is 25,000 MT while Pakistan Australia and USA shall be 50,000 MT each.

All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for all specifications on CFR FO basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of one hundred twenty (120) days from receipt of NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of mandatory countertrade and countertrade performed on best effort. Otherwise, bids shall be considered non-responsive.

Arrival period shall be as follows:

AT LEAST 20%	FEBRUARY 2007
AT LEAST 50%	MARCH 2007
BALANCE	APRIL 2007

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA within the last three (3) years (2004/2005/2006) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:

SUPPLIER	VOLUME (MT)
Government (with good track record)	300,000
Private (with good track record)	50,000
Government (without track record)	25,000
Private (without track record)	25,000

Bad Track record shall mean suppliers and/or companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2004 are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT. Vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidder/s are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to post a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quantity within five (5) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

List of Eligibility Requirements and instructions to bidders maybe secured starting **December 22, 2006** thru MR. PIOLITO C. SANTOS, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Chief III, Directorate for Marketing Operations, 4th Floor, Left Wing, Philippine Sugar Center Building, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City with telephone numbers 454-1890, 426-0569 and 454-1214.

The terms of reference and offer sheets will likewise be available from **December 22, 2006 to January 15, 2007** (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P10,000.00.

The pre-bidding conference will be held on **January 03, 2007** at **10:00 a.m.** at the SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION (SRA) SOCIAL HALL, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Submission of bids will be on **January 16, 2007, between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.** at the SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION (SRA) SOCIAL HALL, North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Opening of bids will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - Dec. 22, 2006)

BANK ACQUIRED ASSET FOR SALE

Location: Lot 5 Greenmeadow Avenue, Greenmeadow Subdivsion
TCT No.: 228549
Description: (1) Vacant Residential Lot
Total Area: 3,138.60 sqms. more or less
Indicative Selling Price: ₱43,539,500.00

* property is sold on an "as is where is" basis *
* subject to bank's evaluation and approval *
* subject to change without prior notice to the public *

For inquiries, please call:
UNITED COCONUT PLANTERS BANK
Asset Management and Disposition Division
Hotline No. 8119797

UCPB

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Shanrong Liu	Chinese Teacher
PHILIPPINE CULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL INC. 1253 J. Abad Santos Ave., Tondo, Manila	Siwei Xu	Chinese Teacher
DIAGEO PHILIPPINES, INC. 23/F, Tower II, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Jeong Su Kim	Commercial Manager-Traditional On-Trade and Modern On-Trade Channel
NEXTFOCUS, INC. 6/F Unioil Center Bldg., 1222 Acacia St., cor. Commerce Ave., Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Trung Le Vu	Customer Service Representative, Vietnam Program
NEXTFOCUS, INC. 6/F Unioil Center Bldg., 1222 Acacia St., cor. Commerce Ave., Madrigal Business Park, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Rika Kazama	Customer Service Representative, Japan Program
ACCESS WORLDWIDE (AWWC) PHILIPPINES, INC. 18/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Edmund Mallari	Country Manager
MANDARIN ORIENTAL MANILA Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Rajendra Prasad Panday	Consultant-Yoga Instructor
B-M INT'L. TRAVEL MANAGEMENT CORP. Rm. 501, GLC Bldg., T.M. Kalaw cor. Mabini, Ermita, Manila	Hyo Sook Jeon	Assistant Finance Manager
B-M INT'L. TRAVEL MANAGEMENT CORP. Rm. 501, GLC Bldg., T.M. Kalaw cor. Mabini, Ermita, Manila	Hyo Jung Jeon	Finance Manager
YOGAWORKS INC. U-1503, 88 Corporate Center, 141 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Ingrid Kate Reynolds	Consultant

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI-Dec. 22, 2006)

CAPIZ ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Established 1971
Timpas, Panitan, Capiz, Phils.
Tel. Nos. (036) 634-0282 to 84; 634-0467; 634-0330; Fax/Phone 634-0264
Email address: capiz_electric_cooperative@yahoo.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Capiz Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAPELCO) Main office at Timpas, Panitan, Capiz invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Barangay Electrification Project in Mun. of Tapaz and Jamindan, Capiz as follows:

1. Delivery and installation of Forty two (42) channels PV battery charging stations.
2. Delivery and installation of Thirty two (32) Solar Home Systems.
3. Delivery and installation of Four Hundred Twenty Four (424) balance of system.

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00) to the Capiz Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAPELCO) main office cashier.

Activities	Schedule
Issuance of bid documents	Dec. 27, 2006 to Jan. 5, 2007
Deadline of bid submission	Jan. 12, 2007 @ 9:00 a.m.
Pre-bidding conference	Jan. 4, 2007 @ 10:00 a.m.
Opening of bids	Jan. 12, 2007 @ 10:00 a.m.

All interested bidders shall secure from Department of Energy (DOE) accreditation or certification of good standing aside from the eligibility requirements prescribed by the Capiz Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CAPELCO) at tel. nos. (036) 6340-282; 6340-264; 525-2003 c/o Engr. Jovencio A. Villagracia.

CAPELCO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive any minor defects or infirmities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Electric Cooperative.

(Sgd.) ENGR. JOVENCIO A. VILLAGRACIA
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – December 22 & 24, 2006)

OBITUARIES

Death Notice

RODRIGO COBOCOB

Died on December 15, 2006 at the age of 65.

His body lies at Sulu St., Blumentritt, Manila.

Interment will be on December 23, 2006 at North Cemetery, La Loma, Quezon City.

The Maryknoll Sisters of St Dominic
wish to announce the entrance into eternal life of

Sister Maria Florence Giambalvo, MM (Sr. Maria Austin)

on December 15, 2006 at the age of 87
at the Maryknoll Sisters Center in New York.

She had been a Maryknoll Sister for sixty-six years.
She taught at Maryknoll Schools in Lipa City and Baguio City.

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you." John 14:1-2

CARLO MIGUEL "MIGS" CEPEDA SISON

February 19, 1977 - December 22, 2002

We sadly remember the 4th death anniversary of "Migs". We also would like to request those whose lives he has touched, to join us in thanking the Lord for his life, reminiscing fond and cherished memories of him.

Bobby and **Marlie**
Paolo and **Pauline, Giulio, Emilio**
Robi and **Angeli, Marek, Enzo, Ruiz**
Gov. Nancy Q. Sison (grandmother)
Sison & Cepeda families

An obituary with apicture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
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INQUIRER OBITUARIES
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
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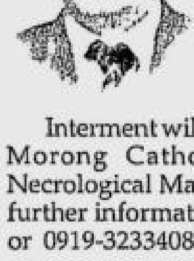
and bank-to-bank payments

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved

NORMAN CALMA NORA, MD

Husband, Father and Grandfather
(October 29, 1940 – December 17, 2006)

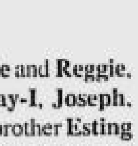


He is survived by his wife, **Dra. Norma Nora**; children, **Vanessa, Jun-jun, Michael, Jelly** and **Toto**; and grandchildren, **Chloe, Courtney, Donovan, Miji-boy** and **Dylan.**

Let us pray for his soul as he peacefully joins our Great Creator. His remains lie at 101 Turentigue St., Morong, Rizal.

Interment will be tomorrow, December 23, 2006 at the Morong Catholic Cemetery after the 12:30pm Necrological Mass at the Morong Catholic Church. For further information, please contact Michael at 635-0290 or 0919-3233408.

FRANCISCO B. VINCE CRUZ



of Domalandan, Lingayen, Pangasinan and
formerly with DLC, Central Bank of the Philippines

Joined his Creator on December 19, 2006 at the age of 76.

His loving wife **Pat**; children and children-in-law **Marizon** and **Froilan**, **Annie** and **Reggie**, **Odette** and **Alex**, **Cristina** and **James**, **Anthony** and **Pearl**; grandchildren **Jay-I, Joseph, Judah, Jensen, King, Alexis, Karlo, Katrina, Kristian, Francis** and **Carmina**; brother **Esting** and sister **Anay**; relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City.

Interment will be tomorrow, December 23, 2006 at The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City after the high noon Mass at the Heritage Park Admin. Chapel.

We design obituaries for free.

BUSINESS

$5M in business deals forged

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SOME $5 MILLION WORTH OF BUSINESS deals between semiconductors and electronics manufacturers and suppliers were struck during a "reverse trade fair" attended by multinational and homegrown firms operating in Southeast Asia, the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions reported.

The trade show dubbed Asean (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Electronics Business Opportunities Exhibition and Conference was held last Dec. 6 in Makati City amid talks among Asean leaders and senior officials on accelerating steps to make the bloc a seamless production unit.

The AE-BOEC was organized by Citem with the help of the Board of Investments, Asean Electronics Forum, and Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc.

Some 78 electronics suppliers were matched about 200 manufacturers including First Sumiden, Sharp Philippines, Fastech Synergy, Texas Instruments, PSI Technologies Inc., Team Pacific Corp., Pricon Microelectronics Inc., GMV Materials Inc., Integrated Microelectronics Inc., Analog Devices Philippines Inc., Temic Automotive Philippines Inc. and Fujitsu Computer Products of the Philippines.

Citem said intra-Asean trade in the electronics sector reached some $88 billion in 2005.

Xstrata ups Tampakan stake

SYDNEY—SWISS-BASED XSTRATA Plc said it would exercise an option to acquire a majority stake in a mine project in the southern Philippines, potentially one of the largest copper and gold deposits in Southeast Asia.

The deposit in the Tampakan region of Mindanao is estimated to contain 11.6 million tons of copper and 14.6 million ounces of gold, according to Australia-listed Indophil Resources NL.

Indophil, which currently holds 95 percent of the deposit, has already spent A$27 million along with London-listed Xstrata on preliminary studies to identify the richness of the ore.

Xstrata said in a statement from its Australian office that it will assume management control of the project on March 30, 2007.

It said the acquisition was an important step in the company's copper division growth strategy following its acquisition of Canada's Falconbridge Ltd. earlier this year.

"Promising mineral resource estimates at the project indicate the project should become a new long life copper asset for Xstrata," Charlie Sartain, chief executive of Xstrata's copper division, said in the statement.

Under its options agreement with Indophil, Xstrata will take up a 62.5 percent stake in the project. It had until Dec. 31, 2007 to make a decision.

British prospector Tony Robbins in the early 1990s helped identify the ore-rich Tampakan lode for the then WMC company of Australia before resigning and forming Indophil.

Indophil has promised thousands of jobs for the area's impoverished and ethnically divided communities if development work goes ahead.

Many of the communities of Christians, Muslims and a smaller number of animists in the area live in huts without water or electricity in the foothills around the mine site.

Reuters

Manhattan Garden City
AT THE ARANETA CENTER

Connecting You to the Metro's Most Important Destinations.
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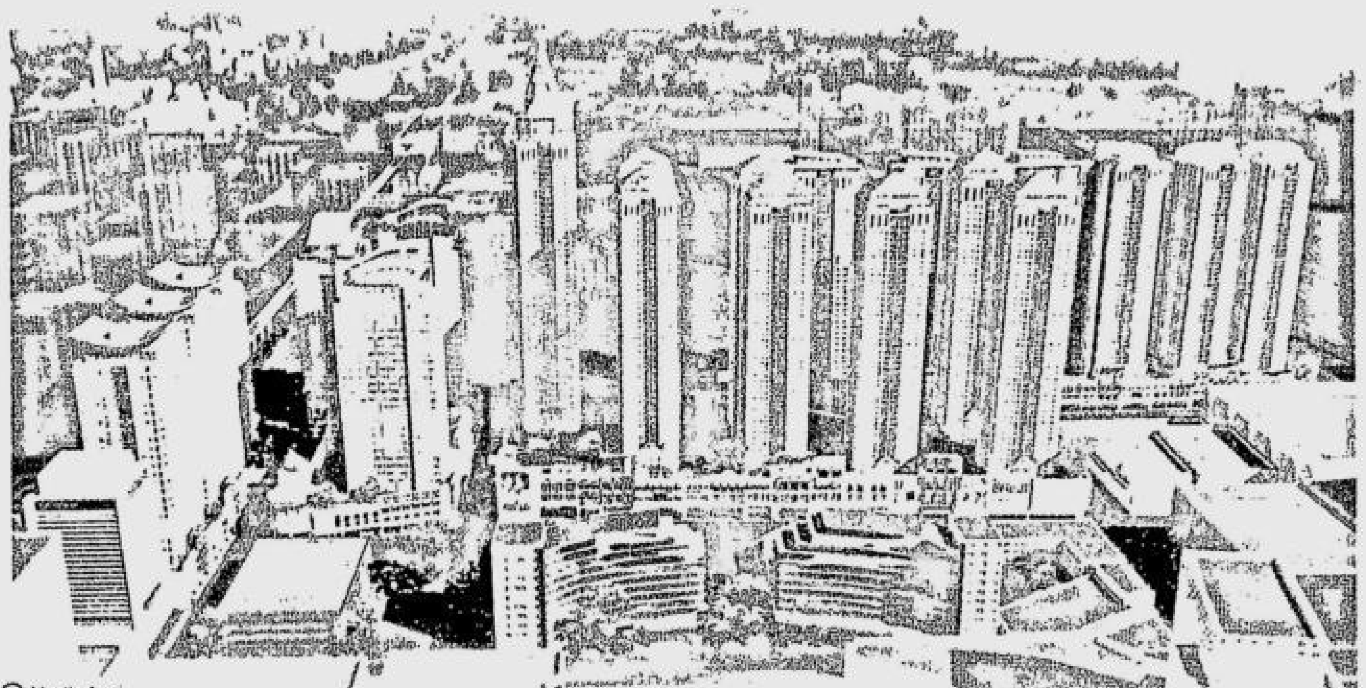
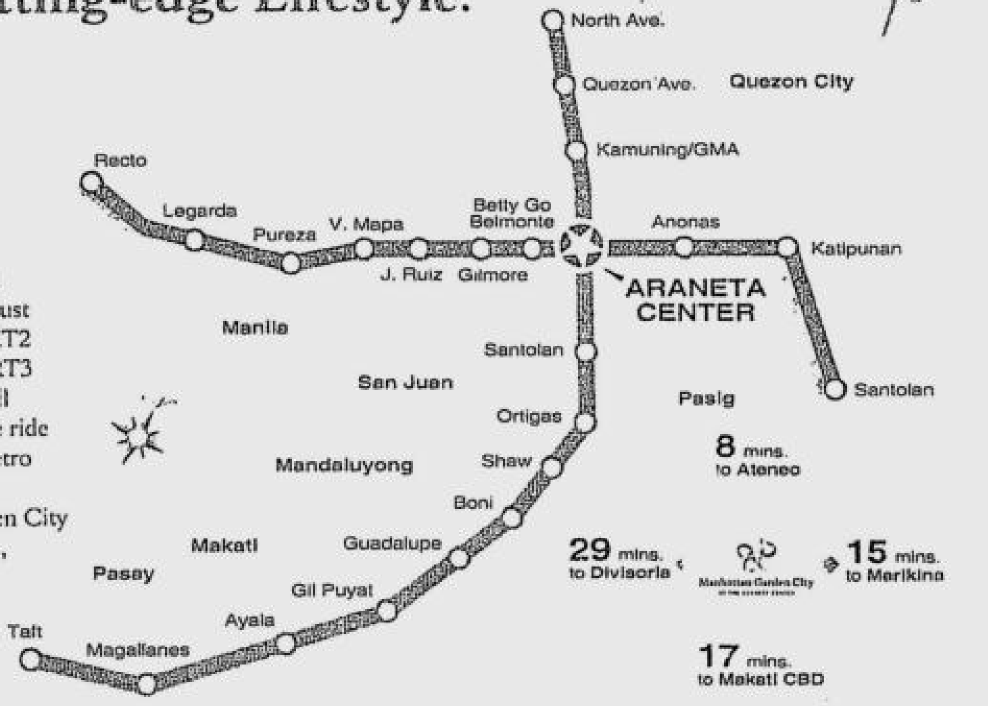




The Manhattan Garden City is the country's first transit-oriented development, linking you to not just one but two train systems: the LRT2 along Aurora Boulevard. And MRT3 along EDSA. So you're just a stroll away from a quick and traffic-free ride to virtually all major points of Metro Manila.

What's more, Manhattan Garden City connects you to the shops, offices, restaurants and entertainment centers at the Araneta Center. So you can live, shop, play and move like never before.

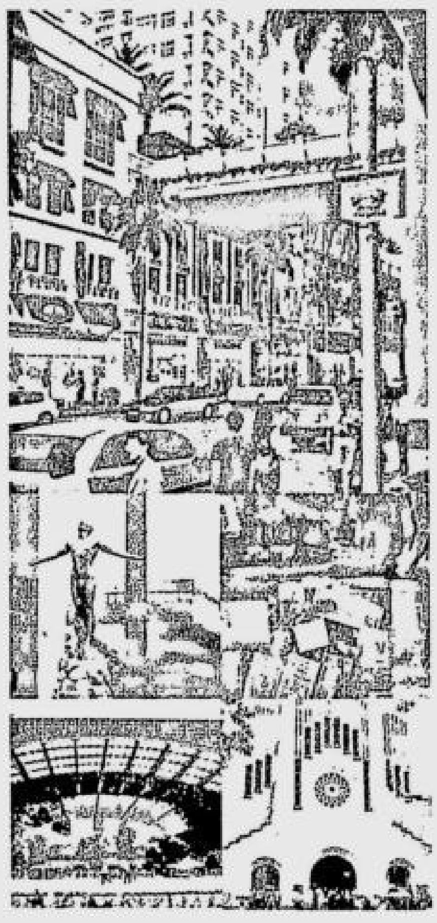
Easy ride around the metro.

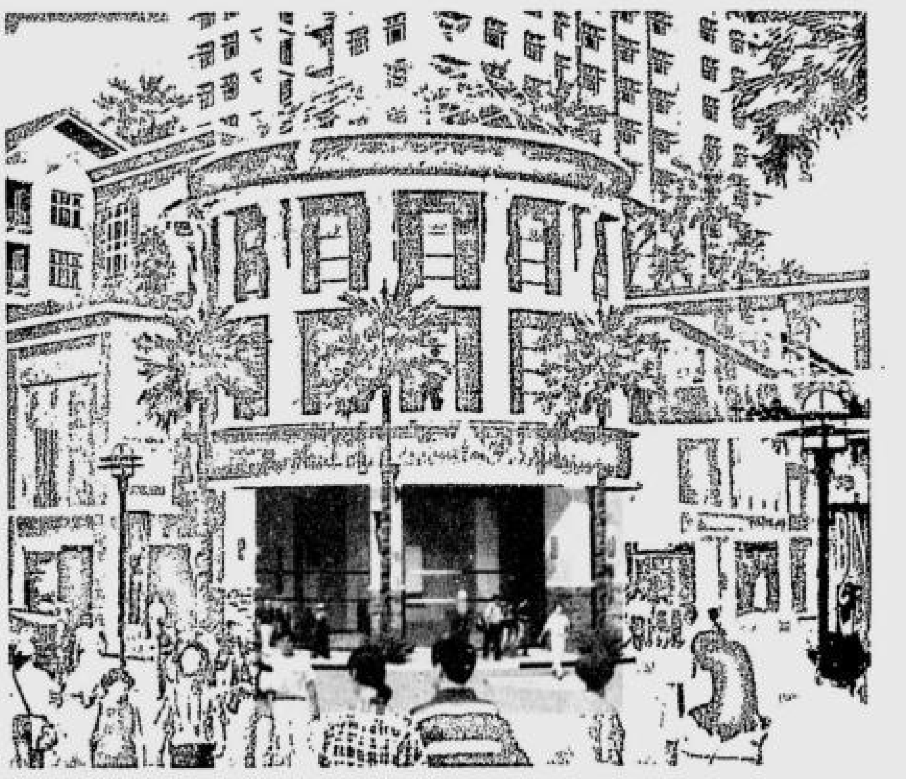
A **729-meter-long footbridge** standing four stories above the streets interconnects all 20 residential towers of your community. And leads you straight to the LRT2 and MRT3. There are lush greenery and benches. So going to the train stations is as enjoyable as a walk in the park.

With the trains close by, the power to go places is yours. Your children can be in Ateneo or UP in Quezon City in just 8 minutes via the LRT2. Or Manila's university belt in 19 minutes.

Your wife can get to Divisoria's bargain stores in 29 minutes. While you can be in your office in Ortigas in 6 minutes, Ayala Avenue in 17 minutes or Taft Avenue in 22 minutes through the MRT3. And since both lines link up with the LRT1, you can reach many more places in the metro than ever before.

This means you spend *less* time on the road. And *more* fun time with family and friends.





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Manhattan Garden City enjoys direct access to the giant playground that's the Araneta Center. Your entry point is a **four-level transfer station** with a hotel-style lobby, grand staircase and four passenger elevators. The station connects you at the third level to the Gateway Mall and its Oasis floating garden. From there, you're just steps away from Rustan's, SM, Shopwise, Ali Mall, Farmers Plaza and the iconic Araneta Coliseum.

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Paradise in the Sky

Manhattan Parkway Residences
at the Manhattan Garden City, Araneta Center

Manhattan Garden City welcomes you to its first phase: Manhattan Parkway. Take your pick of cozy executive studios and relaxing one-bedroom suites housed in three towers. With sweeping views of the Araneta Center and Manila Bay. At the fourth-story garden deck, enjoy the trellised walkways, jogging trails, fitness station, indoor sauna/spa and gym. And you're just a footbridge away from more play amenities—and more fun—at the upcoming phases.

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BUSINESS*Friday*
E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph
Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Make your venture work in foreign lands

Filipino franchisers with outlets abroad list ways to succeed

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IF A COMPANY CAN MAKE it in the Philippines, they will make it anywhere.

This is a view shared by many, considering how big and small companies alike are faced with a host of challenges in the Philippines, not least of which are the unabated influx of cheap goods from China and the entry of foreign competition with the liberalization of the retail industry.

Only the fittest survive in this ever-changing Philippine retail landscape. The weak and the ill-prepared will fall by the wayside.

And for this, Philippine companies harboring ambitions of venturing into foreign shores are forever grateful.

Because they honed their skills in such a competitive arena, local firms feel confident that they have a good chance of duplicating their success in foreign shores, despite the unfamiliar market and the alien territory, through franchising.

One of the intrepid small and medium companies that have followed the Philippine multinationals' example of finding fortune overseas is Chowking, the Chinese food arm of the Jollibee group of companies.

Chowking has 10 outlets in the United States, six in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and three in Indonesia.

"The US and Dubai outlets are doing well in terms of sales, the sales are returning good profits and continue to sustain its growth as the brand gains improving equity," says Chowking CEO Rafael dela Rosa. "We are now planning to open the next three stores in 2007 in Indonesia. The US and Dubai franchisees are also planning to open six and three more outlets, respectively."

Dela Rosa says Chowking did not have to dramatically alter its way of doing things to suit the foreign markets. The only difference is that Chowking has to work hard at establishing a brand presence, and this means getting the best sites and working fast to put up more outlets.

For other Philippine companies to do just as well, he says the first step is to send out a team in the target countries to understand the market, culture, legal requirements, logistics and the other factors to shore up confidence.

"One year to two years would be a good enough time allotment. For food business like ours, we should be able to configure products to the taste and profile, and of course, the price that the local customers would love," he says.

A smaller company in a totally different field is also making inroads in the foreign markets. That's Cebu-based Islands Souvenirs.

Since 1999, Islands Souvenirs has been giving foreign cities a look into Filipinos' creativity and flair with design.

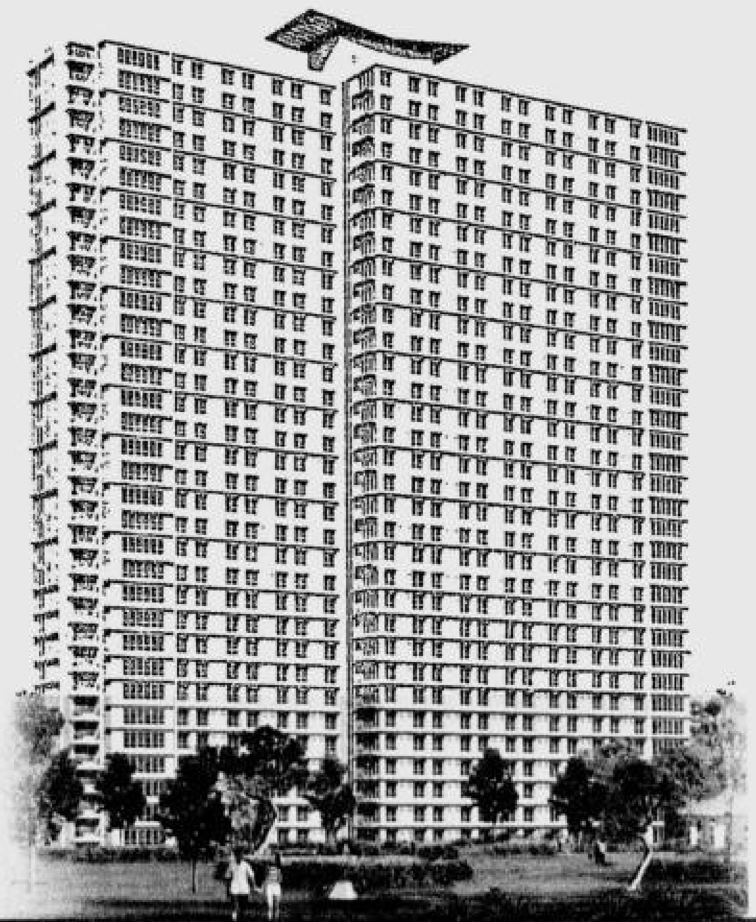
Islands Souvenirs has three shops in Okinawa, two in Singapore and one in Macau.

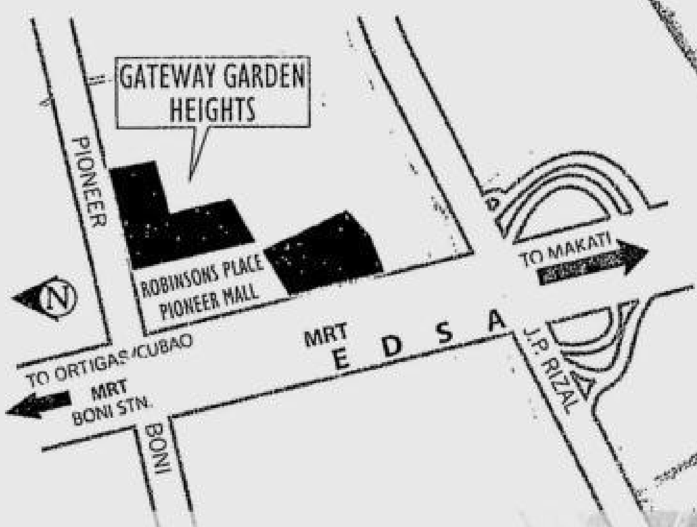
Islands Souvenirs president Jay Aldeguer says in an interview that for small and medium-scale companies to penetrate foreign markets, it is important to adjust to the target market because one formula for success does not fit all territories.

"In our case, we have used franchising and licensing as our main tools to penetrate certain areas. We've also learned that unless you're a multinational brand, you will have to establish a presence as if you are a start-up company," Aldeguer says.

"Also, getting a local partner, whether a franchisee, distributor or joint venture, will be highly critical to the success of

MAKE/ B2





Malls
ROBINSONS Malls

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Garden Heights

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Mandaluyong City

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OF LIVING BESIDE THE Mall

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He gave up working with Google for tea

Two years in the business and twenty-something knows he'll be big

By Senen Bravo

WHEN RICHARD SANZ, 26, passed up the chance to work with Google, the world's largest search engine company, he had a bigger vision in mind.

"I just couldn't squander everything I had invested in Tea Square," says Sanz.

He knew focusing on his venture strengthened it particularly since he was already gaining a market among the A, B and C crowd for his flavored iced tea.

Two years since Tea Square started, Sanz has not been resting on his laurels, not even with 20 branches across the country (seven of which are company-owned). For him, raising the bar is the key to continued success. And the overseas market represents another opportunity.

"Nothing is final yet, but it's in the drawing board. I see a lot of opportunities in Hong Kong and other Asean countries," says Sanz.

At first his mind wasn't into business, but with a wife and daughter to feed, and a meager income, it was the answer. He also said that his mother factored in his decision.

"When I was living on my own with my wife and daughter, she stood her ground not to extend any help," says Sanz.

He was only 21 when he fathered a child, earning her ire.

After spending two years in an IT firm, logging 15 hours of work a day, Sanz and his wife decided it was time to consider a better option.

In early 2004, Sanz pooled P100,000 from his savings and a loan. An Electronics Communication Engineering graduate of De La Salle University, he named the business after a tool commonly used by engineering students—the T-square.

He submitted a concept paper to two malls. Only Alabang Town Center gave its nod. He started with a makeshift cart that sold iced tea, different flavored bread sticks, chicken fingers, cheese sticks and pasta in February 2004.

However within August 2004, he got approvals to put up carts in Greenbelt and Glorietta.

At Tea Square, the tea is manually prepared and is in full view of the public.

"This is how we differ from commercial teas," says Sanz.

Like most start-ups, Sanz had to deal with adjustments and refinements. On one occasion during the opening, Sanz had to be the one to pick up the ice.

"I was really dripping with sweat when I reached my cart and risked being mistaken for a delivery man," says Sanz.

Sanz also had to deal with comments from passing friends who thought what he was doing was out of line, he says.

He also had a hard time getting the supply of black and green tea from China because of his age.

"They won't take me seriously," says Sanz.

His first cart, he says, was so bare. The menu board had no visuals, the logo's symbol was so plain and the cups were without design. Targeting a niche market, Sanz knew he had to deliver. He studied graphics design on his own, browsing the Net and leafing through books.

He launched an aggressive sales pitch. He did free sampling and lectured on green tea's health benefits, saying its catechins can slow aging, fight cancer, heart disease and other illnesses, much better than red wine's antioxidant, resveratrol.

Over the past two years, Sanz had to adjust to changing consumer taste, varying foot traffic, and uneven demand. Tea Square redesigned its carts with Eastern and Western motif designs as well as added green tea varieties to the old black ones. One can now enjoy lemon citrus green tea, plain green tea, honey lemon ginseng, blueberry breeze, refreshing mint, fresh calamansi, tropical escape, apples and cinnamon and four red berries.

On lean months, Sanz does promos and adopts LoyalTea cards in which a customer gets free iced tea after earning nine points from previous purchases. Marketing involves displaying tarpaulin posters at malls.

"We really intend to fish and cultivate them," says Sanz.

Last year, a marketing expert encouraged him to go into franchising.

Sanz started working on the requirement like documentation of product preparation, customer service, item delivery, order of items and opening-closing procedures.

The first franchisee signed a deal during a trade show in Megamall. He put up a cart at Robinsons Metro East.

Tea Square franchising package includes cart, equipment, signages, franchise fee, training, uniform, manuals and initial inventory.

Friends soon invested in Tea Square, making inroads to Cebu, Davao, Cagayan and Iloilo.

Company-owned outlets are at Alabang Town Center, Glorietta 4, Shangri-La, Mall of Asia, Robinsons Manila, Salcedo Village and Better Living (Parañaque).

A slew of inquiries also prompted Sanz to put up a website (theteasquare.com) and join Affi (Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc.).

"At Affi we are encouraged to develop synergy among members. That system really rubs on you," says Sanz.

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RICHARD SANZ

JANE PADUA-BRAVO

SME access to IGLF loans pushed

THE INDUSTRIAL GUARANTEE AND Loan Fund (IGLF) recently designated the Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation (Serdef) and the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries (UP ISSI) to provide training and capability-building services to improve access by small business borrowers to the various IGLF loan facilities.

This is under the IGLF grant for research and promotion of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) program.

Two groups are targeted to be trained: small entrepreneur borrowers and would be borrowers, and the bank loan officers who are the crucial frontline implementors of the IGLF loan programs.

The capability enhancement series will be implemented in cooperation with the Development Bank of the Philippines, Bankers Association of the Philippines, Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, Chamber of Thrift Banks, and various industry chambers and associations.

Expo makes last minute shopping easy

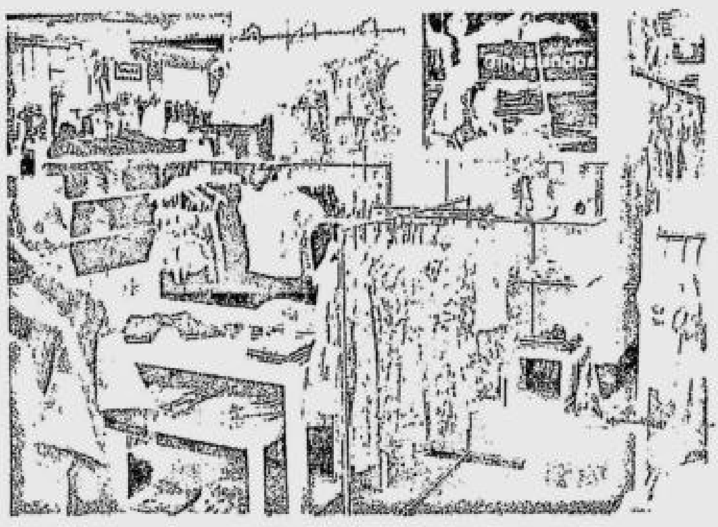
THE CHRISTMAS GIFTS EXPO 2006 WILL run from Dec. 20 to 30 (except Dec. 25) at the Megatrade Halls 2 and 3 of SM Megamall.

The 10-day event has one-of-a-kind gifts from all over the country—accessories from Cebu and Zamboanga courtesy of companies like Trendexpert, RKOC Shells Export and Almar Shell Industries, home decors like acacia kitchen items by Global Export Products, wood chimes by Seven Trees, Pinatubo-ash frames by Excel Frames and Decors, charcoal stoves by G.O. Engineering, bamboo creations by F. Barcenas Bamboocrafts as well as hard-wood furniture from Cagayan Valley, Baguio, Laguna and Palawan. For the handicraft lover, pick from any of the crafts by Analobel Enterprises or natural and recycled paper creations by Paper and Arts.

Aside from toiletries and a variety of scent collections, there are hand-embroidered barongs and export overrun apparels to choose from. Pinoy-made favorites like puto bumbong, suman from Quezon are being sold.

For health-conscious shoppers, drop by at Health Hub to check out revolutionary wellness products and state of the art nutritional microscopy for health awareness.

There is also the two-day Collectible Christmas Fair 2006 on Dec. 22 and Dec. 23. Toys, bargains and collectibles are up for the taking. A sub-highlight to the fair is the Toys and Comics Collectibles Auction from 12 noon to 5 p.m. within its two-day run. Animé Cosplay will be held on Dec. 23, 6 p.m.



GINGERSNAPS goes to Bangkok and Singapore

Make your venture workin foreign lands

From page B1

your business," he adds.

Aldeguer says it is not as difficult to go international as it used to because of technology and globalization.

"Going international does not mean opening shop overseas," Aldeguer explains.

"The Internet, for instance, allows you to sell your produce or service to the rest of the world from your desktop."

He also recommends that SMEs watch out for market trends they can capitalize on and establish as their niche market.

In Islands Souvenirs' case, it saw the potential in providing merchandising expertise for tourism-oriented companies such as hotels, resorts, travel agencies and theme parks.

"No one specializes in conceptualizing merchandise for tourism. It is a niche that has not yet been tapped, plus we do not have to set up a store," he says. "Our strength will be in tourism-oriented concepts and merchandise. This is an example of evolving your core business as we adjust to global trends."

Clothes retailer Gingersnaps is another company that drew from its strengths in the Philippines to conquer markets abroad.

It has four outlets in Bangkok, and four in Singapore including its first boutique in the United Square Mall.

"So far, sales and customer traffic have been steadily growing," says Gingersnaps' Grace Aquino.

"More boutiques are set to open in other countries in the next months and years as the brand will continue to strive to be a global player in the children's and maternity fashion landscape. As of the moment, the brand has been getting good feedback from its customers in Bangkok and Singapore because of the high quality and up-to-date styles of the merchandise," she adds.

Aside from the Bangkok and Singapore store corners and United Square boutique, Gingersnaps merchandise is also distributed in other countries on a wholesale basis. The company continues to receive inquiries regarding international franchise from Hong Kong, the Middle East, and some part of the United States and Europe.

Coffee is another global trend and this works well for local coffee chain Figaro Coffee Corp.

Figaro has even dared to go to China to introduce the mainly tea-drinking Chinese to the joys of drinking coffee.

Not just any coffee, but the coffee that comes from the Philippines.

Figaro currently has two stores in Shanghai, where the bulk of the economic development in the world's third biggest economy is concentrated, and is looking to open another one in Beijing in time for the summer Olympics in 2008.

It also has a store in Dubai and is exploring other markets, such as India and Indonesia, where it can plant the Figaro flag.

Juan says getting the right partner is critical to a company's success overseas because of the unfamiliar market with its own idiosyncrasies.

Getting a partner, Juan says, minimizes the risk of venturing into foreign territory. They contribute their market knowledge and equity.

She adds that Figaro is going for the mainstream market, not just the overseas Filipino workers.

Juan says it is crucial for SMEs to determine before they venture overseas whether they will just cater to a niche market—such as OFWs or the Filipino community—or go for the mainstream market.

She says trying to serve two markets was one of the downfalls of other Filipino companies that have gone overseas but did not quite meet their growth expectations.

"You cannot cater to many markets at the same time because these markets have different needs, so if you have a particular target market in mind, all your efforts, communication and product will have to suit that market," Juan explains.

But there is also wisdom in concentrating on the OFW market and the Filipino community because that market is substantial enough and there are products that will perfectly suit these markets.

"But if you feel that you have a product or a service that has international appeal, there is no need to limit yourself to a niche market," Juan says.

Another company that has a world-class product in its hands is Kamiseta, adjudged the Philippines' best clothing store, with apparel, accessories and footwear catering to girls from 16 to 34.

Kamiseta has over 60 stores in the Philippines and has expanded its network to include one store each in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Guam; Bahrain and Dubai, United Arab Emirates and three in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Kamiseta president Gonzalo Roque says that before thinking of going overseas, a company must first prove itself in the main market or the home country.

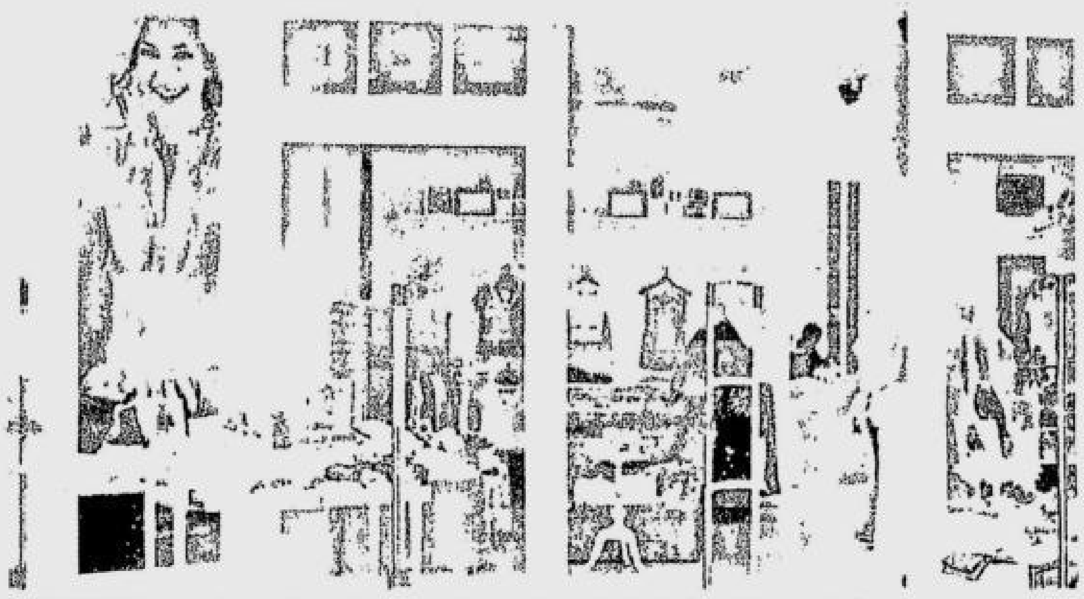
Roque cites the case of other companies in the business, especially in fashion, whose idea of competing is to knock off designs of more successful companies.

He says such an attitude will not do in foreign markets where competition will be tougher since it is entirely new ground.

"You must know your business first because that is the only way you can make it abroad. It will enable you to adapt to other markets," Roque says.

He says that in Kamiseta's case, it just needed to tweak its collections a bit and change the color selection to suit the foreign markets. Fortunately, its styles and basic concepts clicked with the other markets that are also looking for simple yet stylish clothes that fit well.

Roque encourages other companies to also venture abroad considering the immense possibilities.



KAMISETA has outlets in Kuala Lumpur, Guam, Bahrain, Dubai and three in Jakarta.

ONE OF Chowking's three outlets in Indonesia

ISLANDS Souvenirs has three shops in Okinawa, two in Singapore and one in Macau.

Mandaue goes into retail

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

MANDAUE CITY—ONCE IDENTIfied solely as an industrial city, Mandaue City is now attracting investments in the retail trade and tourism industry.

A newly formed company called Golden Great Value Properties Inc. is eyeing the construction of a shopping mall at the Mandaue City reclamation area.

Carlos Co, president of the mall developer Golden Great Value Properties Inc., says the company investment for the Parkmall@168 project would reach P200 million.

The company plans to start construction of the 1.8-hectare mall in January 2007.

The construction phase would take six months while the tenants would take three months to do the finishing works, Co said.

While the 168 Mall in Manila does not have anything to do with the project, Co says, the concept is similar: Offering cheaper but quality products.

The initial plan was to construct a one and half level structure but the company is planning to expand it to two levels if it reaches agreement with potential tenants, such as call center and government service agencies, he adds.

Co says the company is negotiating with prospective partners but he refused to disclose any details.

Mandaue City Mayor Thadeo Ouano also bares that the Cebu Boardwalk project has started construction and is expected to be operational by the middle of 2007.

The project is owned and developed by FF Cruz and Company.

The first phase, which includes the Esplanade, the amphitheater and the restaurant strip, will be turned over to tenants at the end of January 2007.

The second phase, which is composed of an upscale ethnic market and a health and wellness village, would be turned over for fit-out to the tenants in March.

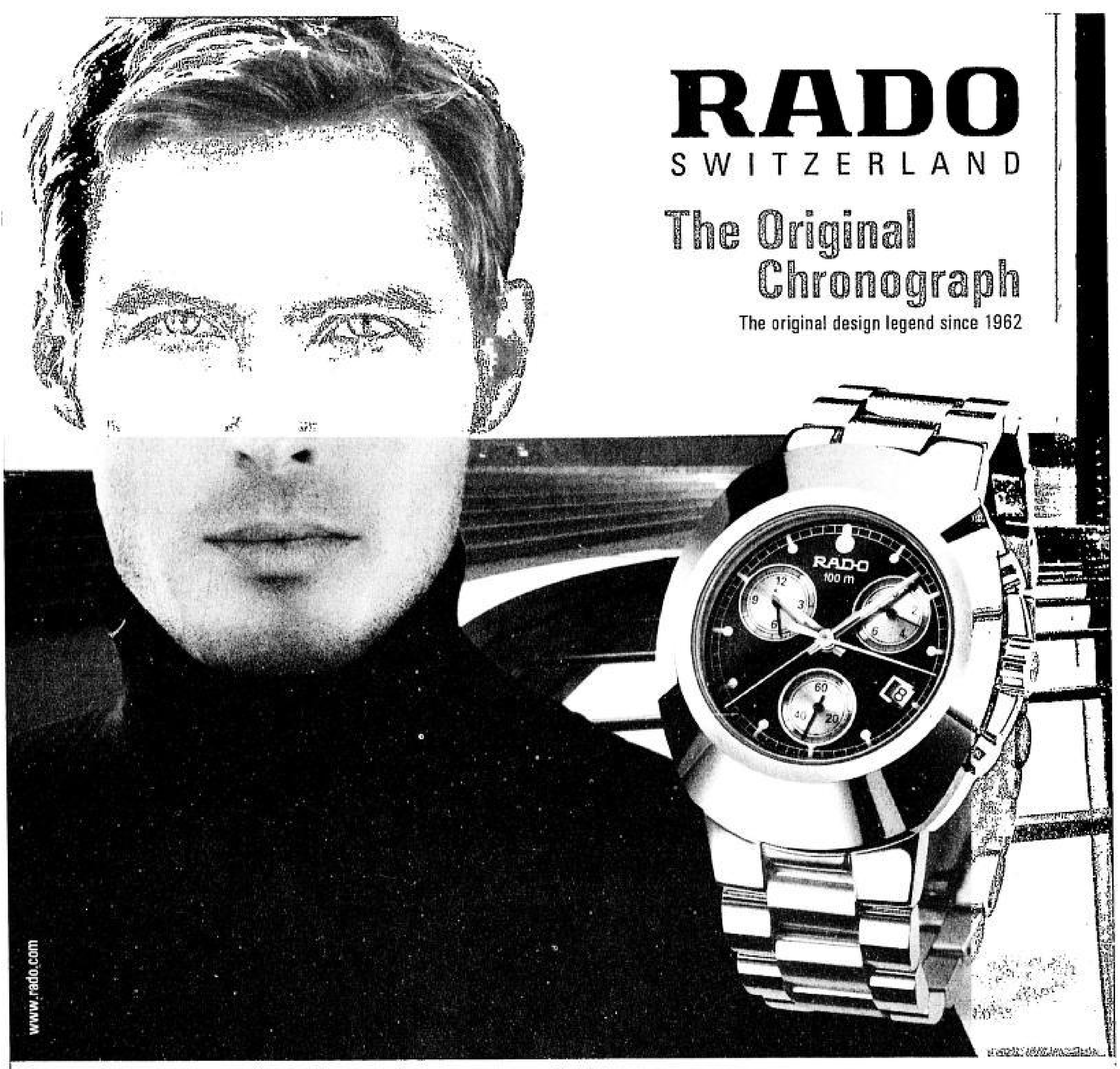
Ouano discloses that another investor is looking into the possibility of investing in the Mandaue reclamation area.

He says a Hong Kong-based group has expressed interest in putting up a five-star hotel at the back of the mall site, the lot formerly leased by the Uniwide group.

However, he says, Mandaue City is still working some details with the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (PAGCOR) for a possible casino franchise, which the HK group would like to acquire.

Ouano says the presence of the Cebu International Convention Center (CICC) would enable the city to promote itself as a convention hub in Cebu.

"My city's management team, together with world renowned urban planner Palafox and Associates, formulated a strategy to position the city as a preferred destination for international expositions and conventions," Ouano says during the formal launching of the city's new identity held recently.



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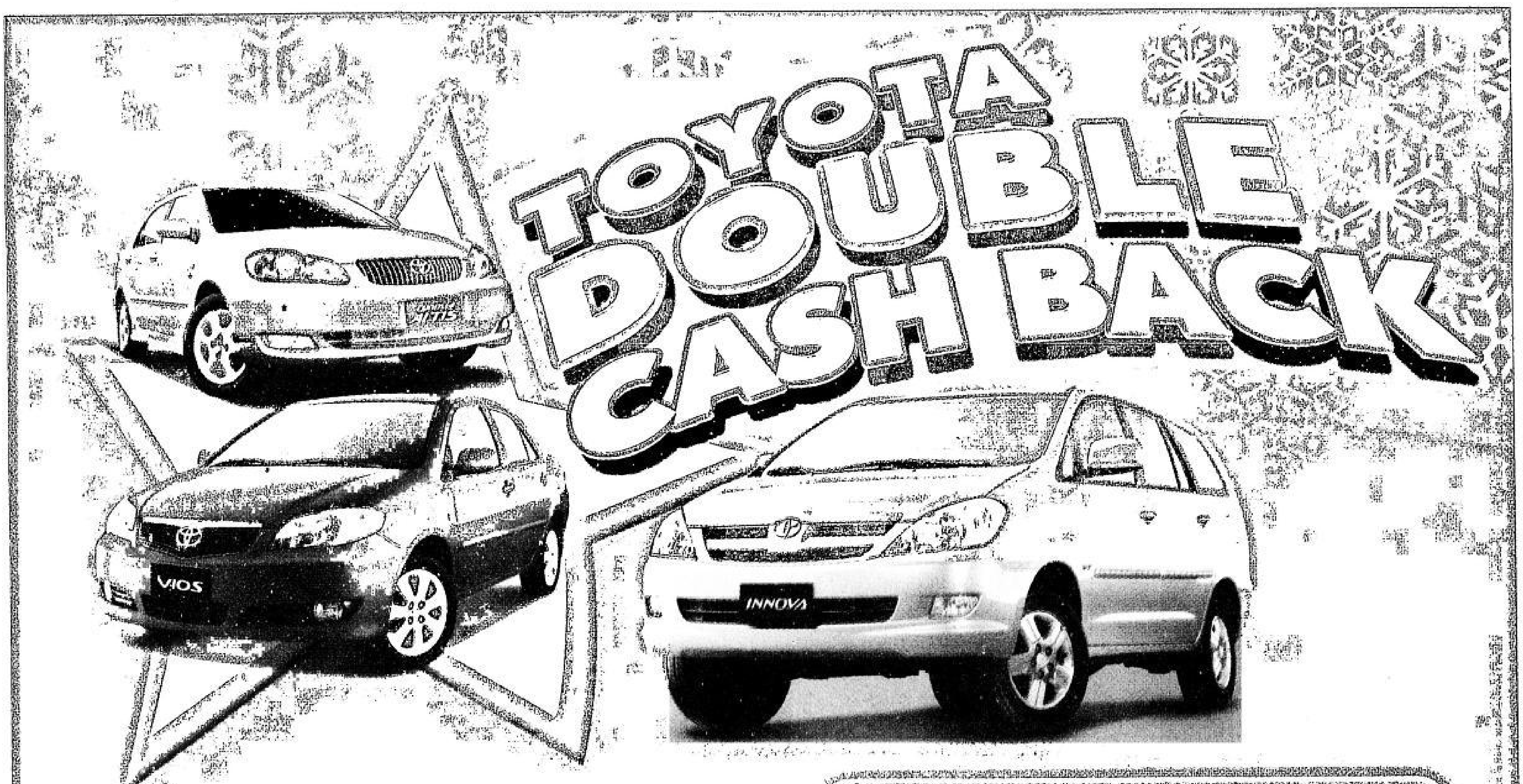

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TAX-FILES

By Eleanor Montenegro and Joel Tan-Torres
SGV & Co.

IN AN EFFORT TO TIGHTEN THE LEASH ON full public disclosure of corporate information, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) may have tightened the leash a little too tight.

The SEC has issued rules providing for stringent disclosure requirements for registration papers and the general information sheet (GIS). The GIS is required to be filed with the SEC every year, within 30 days from the date of the corporation's annual stockholders meeting as stated in the corporation's by-laws.

SEC Memorandum Circular No. 3, Series of 2006 issued on Feb. 16, 2006, requires all corporations and partnerships applying for registration with the SEC to state the following in their articles of incorporation/partnership:

- Specific address of the principal office, which should include building number, street name, barangay, city or municipality.
- Specific residence address of each incorporator, stockholder, director, trustee or partner.

The circular also requires all corporations to state in their GIS the specific residence address of each stockholder, officer, director or trustee. The GIS is a document that serves as a report on material information regarding the corporation. Previously, stockholders, directors and officers were able to maintain confidentiality by merely indicating their office or business addresses in the GIS.

Disallowing a standard practice

The circular specifically states that "Metro Manila" will no longer be allowed as address of a corporation's or a partnership's principal office. This has been a standard practice for entities considering that their exact addresses may not yet be available at the time registration is made.

A review of the Corporation Code, however, shows that Section 14 on the contents of the Articles of Incorporation, merely requires that the articles of incorporation to be filed with the SEC should substantially state: "the place where the principal office of the corporation is to be located, which must be within the Philippines." The Corporation Code does not require the disclosure of the corporation's exact principal office address.

In Section 15 of the Corporation Code , which provides for the form of the articles of incorporation, the "Third" article merely states:

Third: That the principal office of the corporation is located in the City/Municipality of __________ Province of __________, Philippines;

It seems, therefore that the SEC's latest circular expands the requirements of the Corporation Code.

Because the Corporation Code only requires a substantial indication of the place where the corporation's principal office will be located, the previous and standard practice was to merely indicate: "Metro Manila" as the location of the principal office. This practice, which was allowed by the SEC, had practical benefits.

The designation of "Metro Manila" as the principal office address enabled a corporation to transfer the principal office, where required by exigencies of the business, anywhere within Metro Manila without having to go through the process of formally applying for an amendment of the articles of incorporation. Because of Circular No. 3, all corporations that will be registered after the circular's effectivity will now have to amend their articles every time they need to move principal office. This is a costly and time-consuming consequence of the new rules.

Issues in application

The seeming straightforwardness of the Circular belies certain questions regarding its application.

First, since the Circular speaks of the "articles of incorporation," it is not clear whether these rules apply to a branch of a foreign corporation applying for license to do business in the Philippines. A branch's articles of incorporation are only registered in the country of incorporation of the parent company.

Second, the circular does not require existing corporations whose articles do not comply with the disclosure requirement to apply for amendment. Accordingly, if a corporation currently using "Metro Manila" as principal office location desires or needs to move its principal office the circular is silent as to whether the corporation is required to amend its articles of incorporation to reflect the specific address.

Third, the validity of designating "Metro Manila" as the location of the corporation's principal office seems supported by Section 51 of the Corporation Code which requires that "stockholders ... meetings shall be held in the city or municipality where the principal office of the corporation is located, and if practicable in the principal office of the corporation, Provided, That Metro Manila shall be considered a city of municipality."

Consequences of noncompliance

Articles of Incorporation/Partnership that do not comply with the new disclosure requirements will not be accepted by the SEC for processing.

GIS that do not make the proper disclosure will be considered as not filed and the corporation may face penalty/fine for noncompliance with the SEC's reportorial rules. The fine is a graduated scale from a minimum of P1,000 to a maximum of P10,000 depending on the corporation's retained earnings based on the latest audited financial statements.

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GOINGS ON

Manila Bay property named SM BayCity

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. SAID IT HAD christened its urban development project in front of the Manila Bay as "SM BayCity."

The property is a 60-hectare lot that has been earmarked for development into an alternative business district. It is the home of the world's third largest mall, the SM Mall of Asia and the corporate offices of SM Investments and its subsidiaries.

SM BayCity also features an exhibition and convention center, office areas, a sports arena, a row of hotels facing the bay, and a commercial ferry terminal.

Krispy Kreme opens in Megamall

AFTER THE OPENING OF ITS FLAGSHIP store in Bonifacio High Street at The Fort, Krispy Kreme, America's doughnut, opened its second store in Manila yesterday in SM Megamall Bldg. B, upper ground floor.

With branches all over the US, Canada, Mexico, UK, Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, and Korea, Krispy Kreme is known for its fresh, hot doughnuts and fun opening day festivities.

Krispy Kreme not only offers its famous Original Glazed doughnuts and a variety of filled, cake and sprinkled doughnuts, but also a wide selection of coffee beverages made from high quality beans.

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- **Pinoy pride photos** by Jun de Leon /F1

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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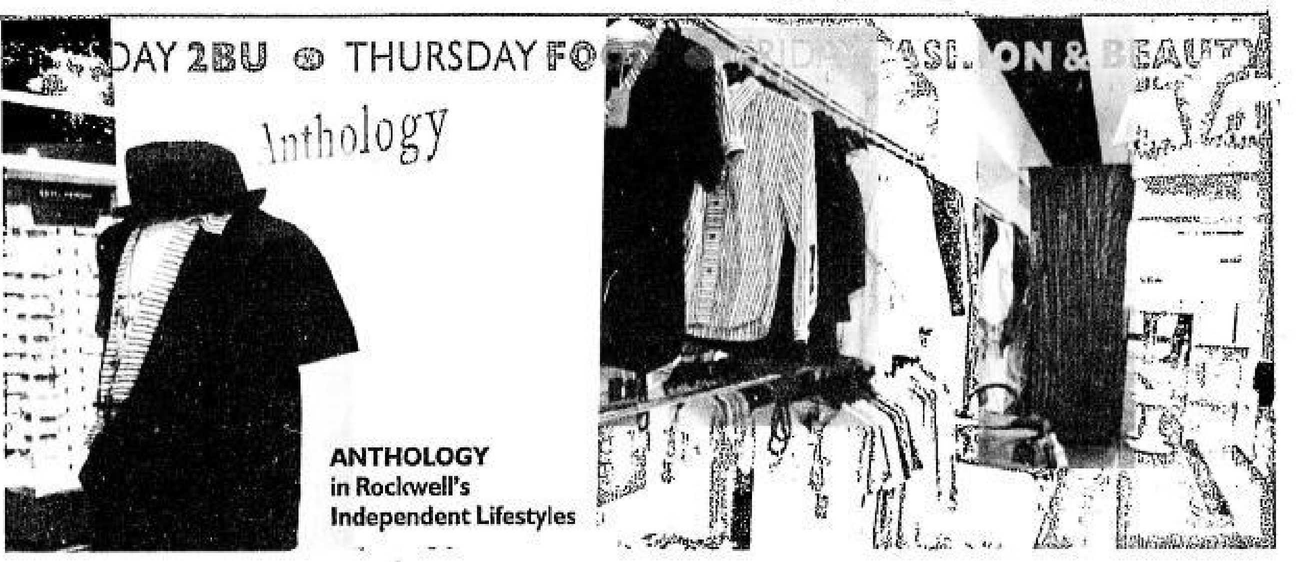
Thelma Sioson San Juan

Selling fashion a tough act



ANTHOLOGY in Rockwell's Independent Lifestyles

THE PHILIPPINE FASHION DESIGN INDUSTRY is—pardon the comparison—like President Macapagal Arroyo. It is a lucky survivor.

That much was evident in 2006. Fashion designers found their clientele wherever they may be—in their shops or in malls. For instance, it's impressive how a bunch of fashion entrepreneurs/*fashionistas*/designers opened their little stores at Independent Lifestyles at Rockwell's Power Plant, with a range of captivating merchandise—from vintage Prada bags to dresses, boleros, shoes, accessories they themselves designed for affordable prices—and turned Lifestyles into a regular destination of *fashionistas*.

When I checked it out two weeks ago, I almost went AWOL from the office, lost as I was among the many finds. Guided from one stall to another by stylist Luis Espiritu, who has his own bag line, I found Anthology by Noel Manapat, Millet Arzaga, Chechel Joson and Luis; Mitzi Quilendrino's MAUD, Amina Aranaz's Aranaz, Tina Navarro's Ilaya (I could never have enough of her coats and boleros which I find so chic on our editors, Stefanie Cabal and Trisha Chua), Happy David's Get Happy, and many more.

Finding their design niche and market is how young Filipino fashion designers and entrepreneurs manage to survive the tide of cheap China goods and luxury brands.

The young designers don't need big stores to sell their goods, just stalls, bazaars and friends of friends to buy their stuff. Yet one sees the passion that goes into what they make and sell.

Beyond small and big retail, fashion designers somehow also got the chance this year to stage their collections before audiences that cut across age markets, even if they barely had the means to shoulder production and marketing costs.

So what did they do to have a show? They looked for sponsors and patrons. Gone are the days when rich and well-placed patrons such as Imelda Cojuangco (with PLDT) could bankroll a designer's gala show of full collections. Gone are also the First Ladies and Cabinet spouses who sponsored fashion shows to raise funds. Imelda Marcos' Bagong Anyo productions remained unmatched to this day, using fashion collections to boost the regime's image. Ming Ramos even drew designers from the Asean countries to pit their talents against our own, with CNN's Elsa Klensch flown in to cover the design shows. After that it was all quiet on the fashion show front, with sporadic but heroic efforts of the likes of Richard Tann (Fashion Watch) breaking the silence.

Corporate branding

The last three years, big business took over the sponsorship of fashion shows.

Thus, fashion design became part of corporate branding, as big brands learned the most important marketing lesson of the 21st century: Lifestyle is the most effective vehicle to get your market. Your market wants to buy a lifestyle, not just a product, so you're selling a lifestyle. Lifestyle becomes the product. And fashion design is the most prestigious way to do it.

The downside, however, is that the designer's fashion statement is subsumed to the corporate brand. The fashion designers end up merely interpreting the pitch of the brand, in many cases, with clumsy, if pathetic, results.

This was what made my experience in staging Metrowear—the Series and the Gala different. When Samsung agreed to co-present the Series and the Gala, it bought into our fashion vision—to give the designers the rare chance to showcase their design statement for the '06 holidays and then for 2007. It didn't interfere with the designers' fashion statements.

Why did we produced the fashion show? Because the means were there: our Metro magazine, our firm's manpower, logistics and sales force, the ABS-CBN's vast studio (which we used two years in a row). But most of all, it's because of the night-outs I've had, still

SELLING/ C3

SAMSUNG'S Pen Roque and Angie Limbaco with Metro editor in chief Melanie Cuevas (center) at Metrowear Gala

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Nokia N73 (3G)	21,200	18,200	14,500	9,500	4,100	FREE
Nokia N80 (3G)	26,500	23,500	19,800	14,800	9,400	3,800
Nokia N91 (3G)	26,900	23,900	20,200	15,200	9,800	4,200
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*All winners must be registered Mabuhay Miles Members to avail of the prizes. Non-members can apply for a Mabuhay Miles account via www.mabuhaymiles.com. Acquired mileage points may be converted to avail of free trips to other destinations. For inquiries regarding Travel Award booking and redemptions, you may call PAL's Reservation or the Mabuhay Miles Service Center. Mabuhay Miles terms and conditions apply. Visit any Smart Wireless Center nearest you or see posters and flyers for details.

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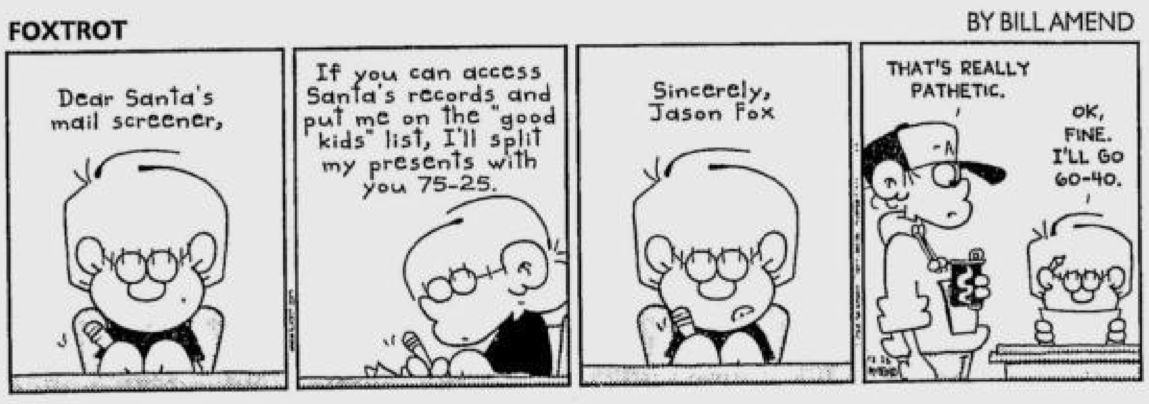
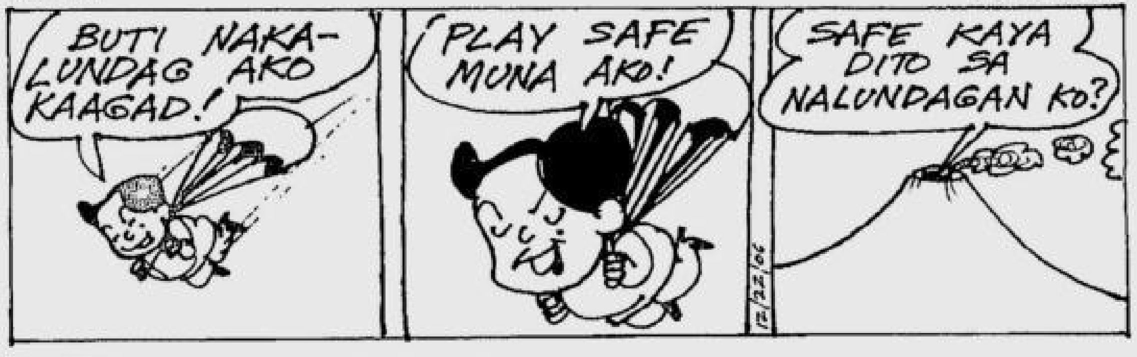
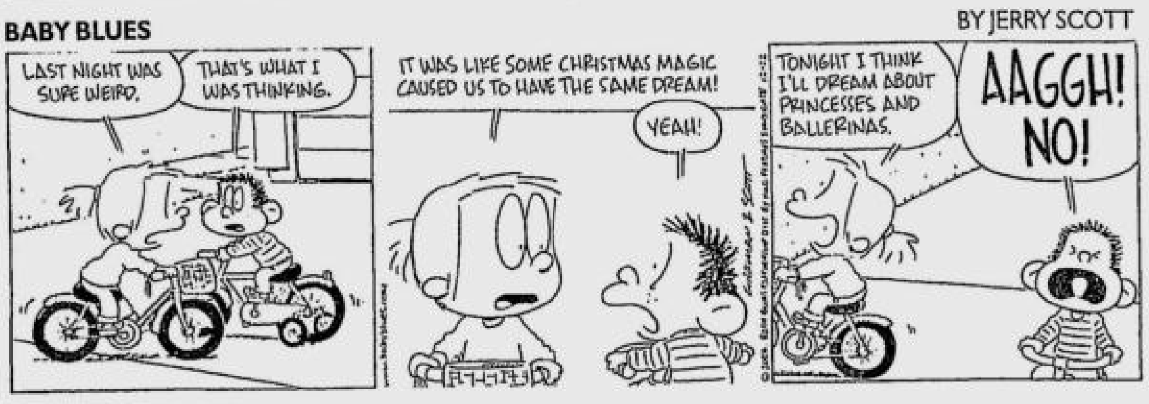
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


Dear Santa's mail screener,
If you can access Santa's records and put me on the "good kids" list, I'll split my presents with you 75-25.
Sincerely, Jason Fox
THAT'S REALLY PATHETIC.
OK, FINE. I'LL GO 60-40.

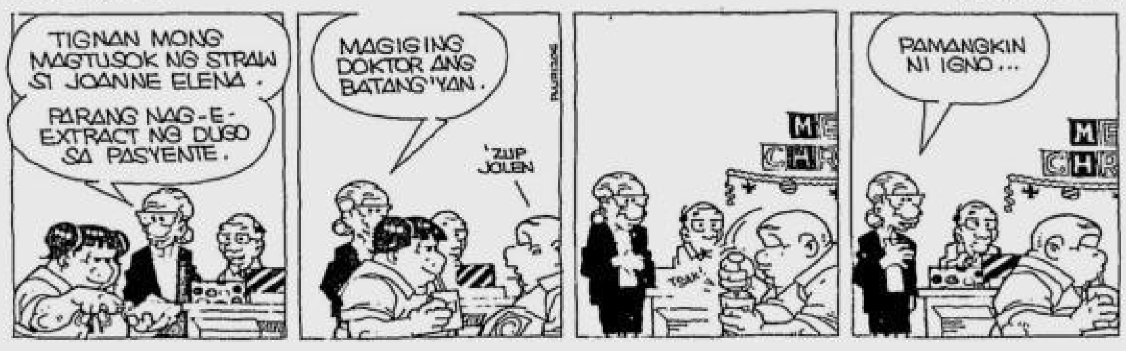
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


BUTI NAKA-LUNDAG AKO KAAGAD!
PLAY SAFE MUNA AKO!
SAFE KAYA DITO SA NALUNDAGAN KO?
12/22/06

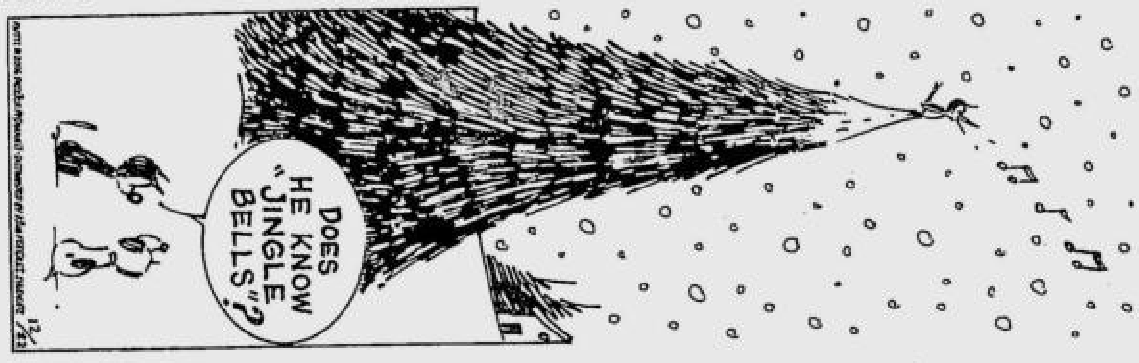
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


LAST NIGHT WAS SUPE WEIRD.
THAT'S WHAT I WAS THINKING.
IT WAS LIKE SOME CHRISTMAS MAGIC CAUSED US TO HAVE THE SAME DREAM!
YEAH!
TONIGHT I THINK I'LL DREAM ABOUT PRINCESSES AND BALLERINAS.
AAGGH! NO!

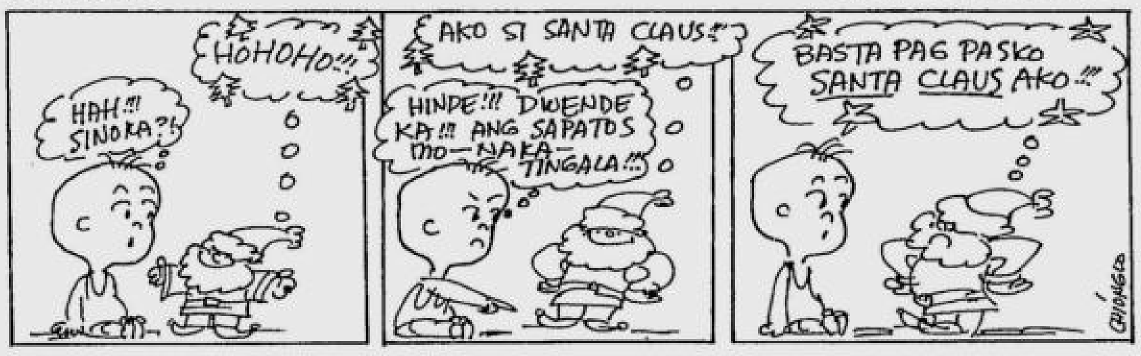
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MONG MAGTUSOK NG STRAW SI JOANNE ELENA.
PARANG NAG-E-EXTRACT NG DUGO SA PASYENTE.
MAGIGING DOKTOR ANG BATANG 'YAN.
'ZUP JOLEN
PAMANGKIN NI IGNO...

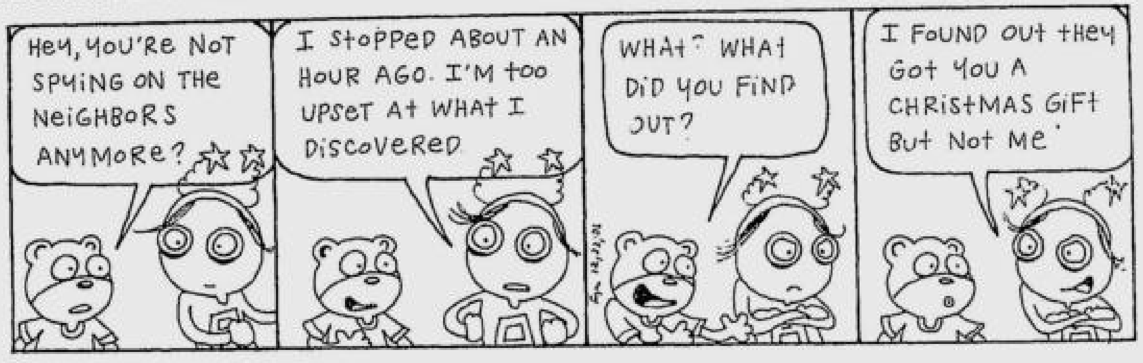
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


DOES HE KNOW "JINGLE BELLS"?

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

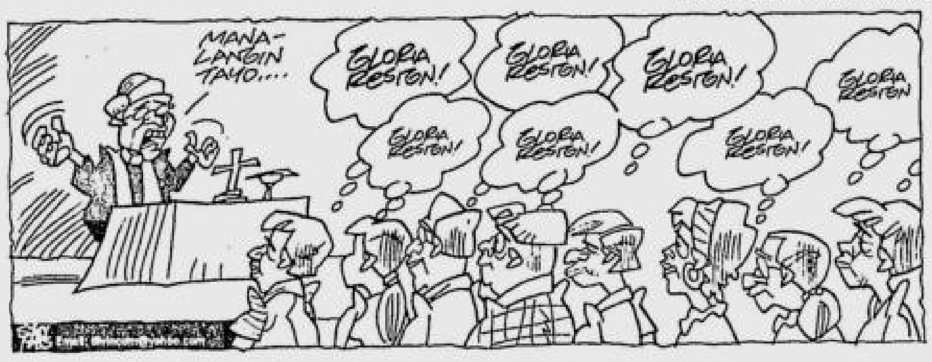

HOHOHO!!!
HAH!!! SINOKA?!
AKO SI SANTA CLAUS!
HINDE!!! DWENDE KA!!! ANG SAPATOS MO—NAKA-TINGALA!!!
BASTA PAG PASKO SANTA CLAUS AKO!!!
CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

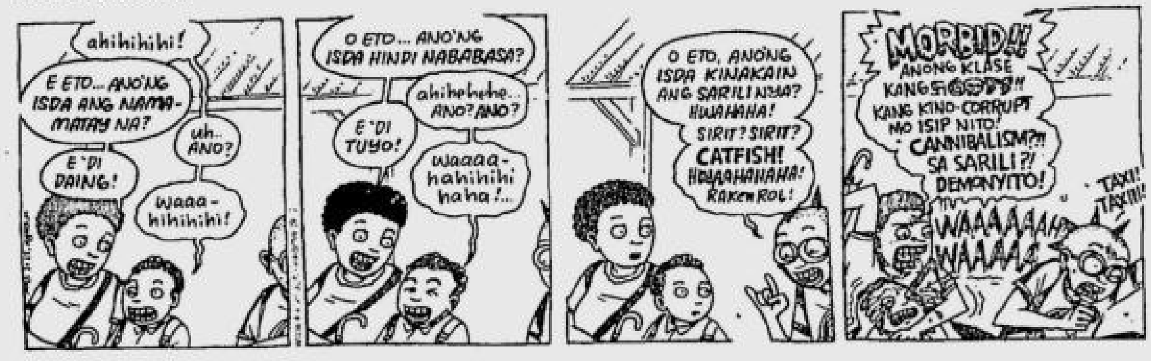

Hey, you're Not spying on the neighbors anymore?
I stopped about an hour ago. I'm too upset at what I discovered
What? What did you find out?
I found out they got you a Christmas gift but Not me

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

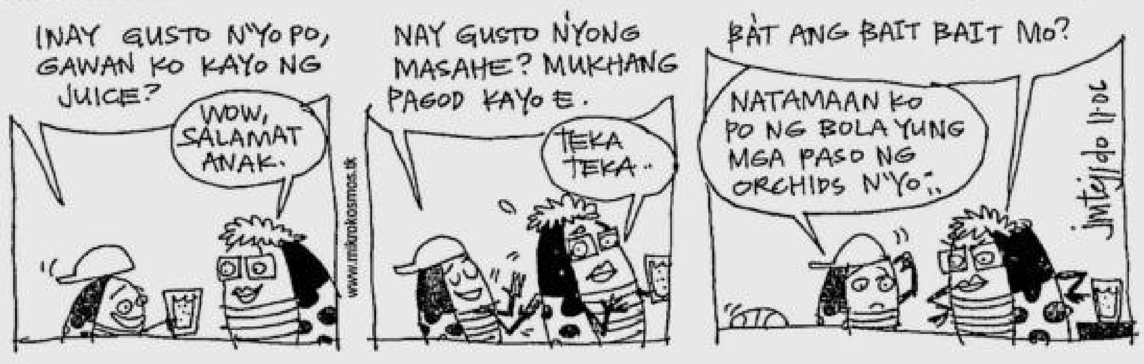
A NON-POLITICAL PRAYER RALLY


MANA-LANGIN TAYO....
GLORIA RESIGN!
GLORIA RESIGN!
GLORIA RESIGN!
GLORIA RESIGN
GLORIA RESIGN!
GLORIA RESIGN!
GLORIA RESIGN!

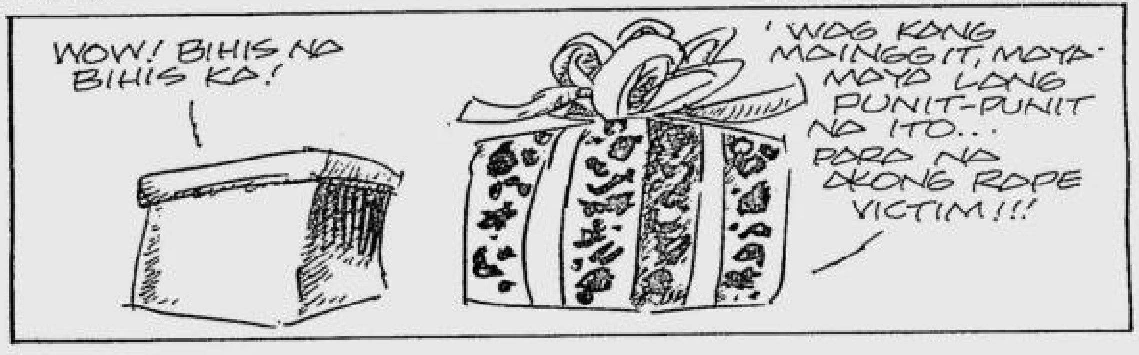
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


ahihihihi!
E ETO... ANO'NG ISDA ANG NAMA-MATAY NA?
uh.. ANO?
E 'DI DAING!
waaa-hihihihi!
O ETO... ANO'NG ISDA HINDI NABABASA?
ahihehehe.. ANO? ANO?
E 'DI TUYO!
waaaa-hahihihi haha!..
O ETO, ANONG ISDA KINAKAIN ANG SARILI NYA? HWAHAHA! SIRIT? SIRIT? CATFISH! HWAAHAHAHA! RAKENROL!
MORBID!! ANONG KLASE KANG ISDA?!! KANG KINO-CORRUPT NO ISIP NITO! CANNIBALISM?!! SA SARILI?! DEMONYITO!
WAAAAAAH WAAAAA
TAXI! TAXI!!!

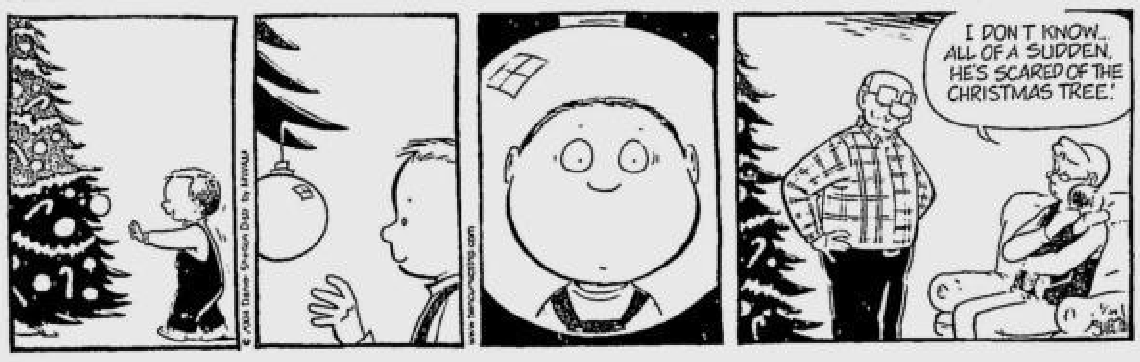
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY GUSTO N'YO PO, GAWAN KO KAYO NG JUICE?
WOW, SALAMAT ANAK.
NAY GUSTO N'YONG MASAHE? MUKHANG PAGOD KAYO E.
TEKA TEKA..
BAT ANG BAIT BAIT MO?
NATAMAAN KO PO NG BOLA YUNG MGA PASO NG ORCHIDS N'YO..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
jmtejido 11-06

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WOW! BIHIS NA BIHIS KA!
'WAG KANG MAINGGIT, MAYA-MAYA LANG PUNIT-PUNIT NA ITO... PARA NA AKONG RAPE VICTIM!!!

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I DON'T KNOW... ALL OF A SUDDEN, HE'S SCARED OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Ballplayer Wade
6 J-N connection
9 Splinter groups
14 "Christ Stopped at __"
15 Caesar's hail
16 Eurasian primrose
17 Post-season show
18 CD-__
19 Dern or Ashley
20 Tulane's salute to the Parthenon?
22 Burning coal
23 Dash
24 __ de plume
26 Asserts before proof
29 Most on edge
34 Split
35 $-due mail
36 Old stringed instrument
37 Slugger Roger
38 Docs
39 Morocco's capital
40 Actor Jannings
41 $
42 Make up one's mind
43 Poet Siegfried
45 Joint seals
46 Skater Midori
47 Negligible amount
48 Katey of "Futurama"
52 Syracuse farmers?
57 Disturbing feeling
58 Silver or Ely
59 Henner on "Taxi"
60 Author Adler
61 Gore and Capp
62 Pizzey and Gray
63 Eagle claw
64 Jan. honoree
65 Student's paper

DOWN
1 Ocean ice
2 German chief
3 Writer Vidal
4 Duke's art class pranksters?
5 Depressions
6 Gold measures
7 Ukrainian city
8 Keepsakes
9 Invoking the force of religion
10 Brief test
11 Kind of soda or sandwich
12 Become fatigued
13 Practice a few rounds
21 Architect Christopher
25 Ref. volumes from the U.K.
26 Summits
27 Andes grazer
28 Nocturnal primate
30 Inactive U. of Maine critters?
31 Composer Blake
32 German city
33 French heads
35 45% of M
38 Initial design
39 Quitter
41 Caste mark
42 Mend by weaving
44 Wildcatter, e.g.
45 Danzig
48 Area meas.
49 Mystique
50 Highlander
51 Ray of "God's Little Acre"
53 Dice toss
54 Med. scans
55 Writer Ferber
56 Snoopy

1	2	3	4	5	■	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14					■	15			■	16				
17					■	18			■	19				
20					21				■	22				
■	■	■	23				■	24	25		■	■	■	■
26	27	28					■	29			30	31	32	33
34						■	35			■	36			
37					■	38			■	39				
40				■	41			■	42					
43				44			■	45						
■	■	■	■	46			■	47				■	■	■
48	49	50	51		■	52	53					54	55	56
57					■	58			■	59				
60					■	61			■	62				
63					■	64			■	65				

By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL

12/22/06

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

C	A	B	S	■	O	M	E	G	A	■	R	A	T	A
O	L	L	A	■	M	A	S	O	N	■	E	R	I	C
M	A	U	L	■	E	S	S	A	Y	■	V	E	E	R
O	N	E	O	U	N	C	E	■	■	G	E	N	I	E
■	■	■	O	N	S	■	■	S	Y	R	I	A	N	S
S	T	A	N	D	■	R	E	T	A	I	L	■	■	■
L	A	G	■	O	F	E	X	A	M	P	L	E	I	S
A	C	E	S	■	L	O	T	T	E	■	E	L	S	A
W	O	R	T	H	A	P	O	U	N	D	■	L	I	L
■	■	■	M	O	R	E	L	S	■	E	R	A	S	E
S	A	R	A	C	E	N	■	■	S	E	E	■	■	■
C	L	E	R	K	■	■	O	F	A	D	V	I	C	E
H	I	N	T	■	D	O	M	E	D	■	E	N	O	L
W	A	D	I	■	A	N	I	T	A	■	R	O	C	K
A	S	S	N	■	M	O	T	E	T	■	E	N	O	S

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12/22/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You like to have goals that guide you. You always make steady progress toward the security you desire in life. You're careful and cautious. You always do your homework. You have a fine mind and know how to use your wit. Despite how you feel inside, you always appear calm and self-assured. Increased solitude in the year ahead will allow you to learn something valuable.
Birthdate of: Diane Sawyer, journalist; Ralph Fiennes, actor; Vanessa Paradis, singer/actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): In the next few weeks, people will notice you more than usual. This is because the Sun is at high noon in your chart, and this acts like a spotlight on you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be open to opportunities to expand your education or travel somewhere. These chances could arise in the next few weeks. Get ready to grab whatever comes your way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You have a strong desire to improve yourself now. Take care of loose ends with inheritances, insurance matters, taxes and debt.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Get more rest if you can. The Sun is as far away from your sign as it gets all year. Partnerships are important in the next few weeks

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have a lot of energy now to get better organized. Do whatever you can to make these improvements. Make hay while the Sun shines!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): The next six weeks are a great time for a vacation or playful activities with children, or to do anything that really gives you fun and pleasure. Love and romance can get a lovely boost now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Home, family and real estate matters are your primary concerns for the next six weeks. Clean up the place. Invite the gang over.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's important to strive to be as clear in all your communications as you can. You're entering a busy six-week period ahead

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Now is the time to give some serious consideration to your values. What do you really want? What really matters in life?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The Sun is now in your sign. This means it's all about you for the next few weeks. Don't hesitate to put yourself first. People and opportunities will come your way.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You need to lie low and work behind the scenes, if possible. You need more solitude. This is a good time to think about how you want things to change in the next year.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Talk with others about your goals and dreams for the future. You'll be surprised at how much their feedback can actually help you or change your direction in life.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

5	3				6			
7					4			
				1		9		
			3				6	4
		9				5		
6	7				2			
		5		7				
			2					8
			5				3	2

Difficulty Level ★★★★

12/22

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	1	7	5	3	8	2	6	4
2	8	5	9	4	6	1	7	3
6	3	4	7	1	2	5	8	9
7	5	1	2	8	3	9	4	6
3	4	9	6	5	7	8	2	1
8	2	6	4	9	1	7	3	5
1	9	2	8	6	4	3	5	7
4	7	3	1	2	5	6	9	8
5	6	8	3	7	9	4	1	2

Difficulty Level ★★★

12/21

PLUS-SIZE can be stylish this Christmas. Great Women with Style offers festive tops in red brocade cotton spandex and fuchsia empire cut with butterfly sleeves. Pair with wide band stretch cotton or black stretch spandex gaucho pants. Check out their holiday collection and qualify for their bags promo up to Jan. 7, 2007. For a minimum purchase of P2,500 of any GWS regular items, you will get a free retro bag worth P500. GWS is available at the L3 Robinson's Galleria and L2 Landmark, Ayala Center, Makati.

Selling fashion a tough act

From page C1

have, with designers—chatting away, bitching, but most of all getting excited about their designs and careers. I believed in them, I still do—no matter the fluctuations of their capabilities.

Fun and faith—that's what gave birth to Metrowear four years ago. We've shared laughter and pain with the designers. Most of all, we have faith in them.

Ah, but never did I also imagine what it would be like going through the chaos of details in producing a show. To begin with, the show was tough to sell.

Amazingly this year, it wasn't tough to sell Metrowear. Samsung agreed with the vision readily. We happened to be on the phone with Samsung's marketing brains Pen Roque and Angie Limbaco, saying in passing how Metrowear wouldn't push through this year because we couldn't find funding, when Pen said, yes, Metrowear could push through. Then we sat down and he listened to what Philippine fashion design needed at this point: Designers must have the chance to make at least 10-15 clothes to put across a statement. They needed a showcase—a runway, literally—to strut their stuff. Good for sharpening their talent, good for competition.

Bring back the regularity of fashion shows of the '70s and '80s which produced today's fashion greats.

Pen agreed and noted that Samsung had the products that hewed to fashion's demand for design, function and craft. These were the Ultra Thin phones and the Bordeaux LCD TV. Thus were born the Series and Gala.

Twenty-five designers unveiled their collections in the Series and Gala—no mean feat. But another breakthrough happened after Rustan's managers invited the designers to sell their clothes at Rustan's.

That's completing the cycle. That was how the vision became real.

Filming Vogue

Breaking into the news this week is Anna Wintour opening the doors of Vogue to TV—a first. Not even in the filming of "The Devil Wears Prada" or "Sex in the City" (which had an episode of Vogue) were TV or movie crews welcomed with open arms into the Conde Nast office.

This time, however, after guesting in Barbara Walters' "20/20" it seems, fashion's power lady softened her stance about the medium. Now she allowed a TV documentary group to film the making of Vogue's thickest issue: the heavy-as-a-phone-directory September issue. According to Women's Wear Daily, the documentation begins in January.

(That's how far advanced they work on the issue!)

GOINGS-ON

Triple treats for 'barkada'

SUN CELLULAR GIVES YOU AND TWO OF YOUR friends the chance to win cash or cars with its Triple Treats Prize Overload promo. Until Jan. 28, you can each win a million pesos in cash or a brand-new Mazda3 car. Also at stake are Canon Powershot Digital Cameras, Sony Ericsson P990i and K790i cell phones, Canon Mini DV Camcorders, IBM Thinkcenter personal computers, Samsung LCD 32" wide screen televisions and Samsung Home Theater Systems with 40" LCD screens. Visit the nearest Sun shop in your area or call the Sun Triple Treats hotline at 3958333 of 333 toll-free. You may also log on to www.suncellular.com.ph for more details.

KIDS' FAIR. Sta. Lucia East Department Store (SLEDS) and Planet Toys are holding a fair until Dec. 31. Shoppers get up to 50 percent discounts on selected children's items, including apparel, shoes, bags, toys and accessories. Santa Goes to SLE Dec. 24-25. Get a free souvenir photo with Santa Claus 3-5 p.m., Dec. 24, by presenting a P500 single purchase receipt from SLEDS.

PROMO. Dine at Robinson's Malls Foodcourt until Jan. 14 and get a chance to win up to P4 million in cash prizes in Robinson's Malls and Coca-Cola's "Magpasaya sa P1 Million Mo." Weekly draws will be held Dec. 15, 22 and 29 and Jan. 5. Grand draw is Jan. 16. Call 6836137/6836100 local 780 or 782.

CONCERT. The Far Eastern University Chorale takes center stage in "Paco Park Presents," Dec. 22, 6 p.m., at Paco Park, San Marcelino, Manila.

KOREAN LANGUAGE COURSE. The Department of Tourism is offering a Basic Korean Language Course 6-9 p.m., Monday-Friday, Jan. 9-March 9. Registration, which ends today, is held at the Standards Development Division, Room 203, DOT Bldg., T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 5257980/5361128/5238411 local 182 and 176.

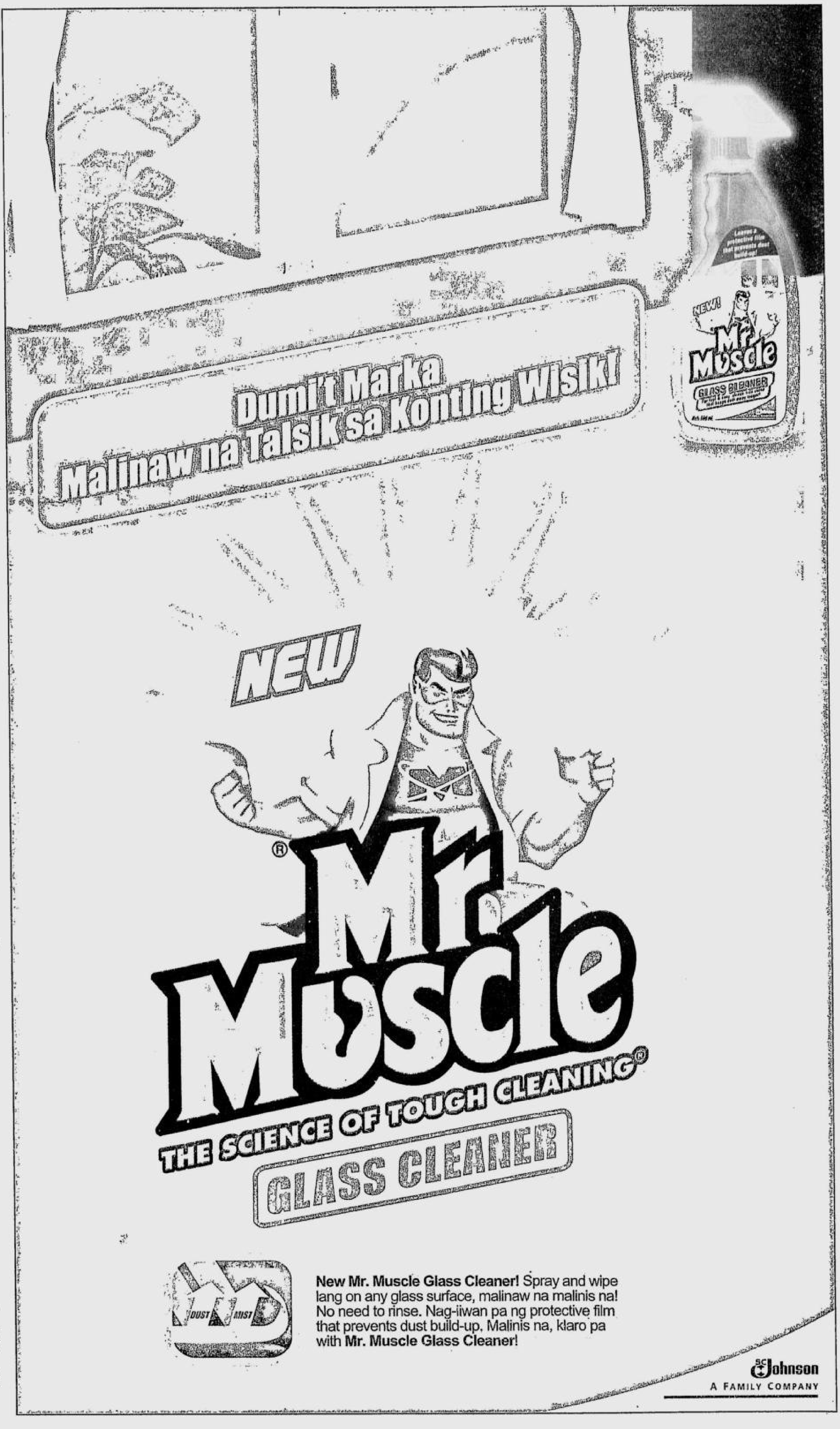
DOUBLE YOUR REWARD. American Express Peso Platinum Credit Card holders have up to Dec. 31 to earn twice as many reward points for every P45 spent in some 20 establishments. Promo participants include Apple Center, Hans Brumann, Prestige Cars BMW, Samsonite, Paul Smith, Bizu, Chronos, Escada, Escada Sport, Kérastase Institute, Kuretake, Laurel, Nike Forum, Nike Women, Patio Pacific Boracay, Sleepcare, St. John, Tsumura and Urban Spa.

TEA SET CONTEST. Deadline for submissions of entries to the first ever tea set competition is Dec. 31. Winners in the contest, a project of the Putik Association of Philippine Potters, will get cash prizes: P20,000, 1st place; P12,000, second; and P8,000, third. Three entries will get honorable mention awards and P5,000 cash. A tea set exhibition and the competition will be held late January at the InterContinental Hotel Manila Lobby at the Ayala Center in Makati. Date to be announced later. A tea set must consist of a tea pot and at least two cups. A submission fee of P200 per entry will be charged. Call The Pottery Workshop at 7292980 or e-mail jonnyputik@yahoo.com.

REUNION. The University of the Philippines Industrial Engineering Alumni Association will hold its grand reunion "Apat na Dekada na, Rumaratsada pa!," Feb. 3, 2007 at the Melchor Hall, UP Diliman, QC. There will be a golf tournament Feb. 2, 7 a.m. at Camp Aguinaldo. Call 9818500 local 3128 or 3149.

FASHION SHOW. A fashion show dubbed "Pamana ng Parañaque, a tribute to Christian Espiritu," is set Jan. 24, 2007 at the Airport Casino Filipino, Pagcor Grand Theater, Ninoy Aquino Avenue, Brgy. Sto. Nino, Parañaque. City. The fashion show will benefit the construction of the Paranaque Museum. Featured fashion designers include Inno Sotto, Dom Martin Gomez, Jojie Lloren, Lorretto and Barge Ramos. Also featured are the Parañaque designers Jun-Jun Cambe, Parrish Espiritu Carlos, Serge Jimenez, Boyet Dysangco, Perri Diaz and Dels Velasco.

TRAINING. The National Museum will conduct "Docents' Training on Philippine Visual Art," Feb. 6-9. The four-day training includes the following topics: Nature, Elements and Organization of Art; Perceptions and Appreciation of Art; Summary of Pre-colonial and Southeast Asian Cultures; Precolonial Art in the Philippines; Philippine Art during the Spanish, American and Japanese Periods; and Study and Appreciation Artworks at the NAtional Art Gallery. Call 5270278 for details.



New Mr. Muscle Glass Cleaner! Spray and wipe lang on any glass surface, malinaw na malinis na! No need to rinse. Nag-iiwan pa ng protective film that prevents dust build-up. Malinis na, klaro pa with **Mr. Muscle Glass Cleaner!**

SC Johnson
A FAMILY COMPANY

Charged with holiday flair

YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO BE CAUGHT wearing the same little black dress during the holidays. The season calls for color and dramatic flair.

Cinderella has anticipated the need for a little holiday flair and has a lot of pieces that can be styled in a multitude of ways.

For BPI credit-card holders, there are more reasons to shop at Cinderella and free-standing stores of U2, Esprit, NafNaf, Pierre Cardin, Oshkosh B' Gosh, Clarks British India and Rampage. For a minimum purchase of P3,000, a BPI cardholder can pay installments at reduced rates until Feb. 28, 2007.

And for the same period, customers who use their BPI Express credit at any Cinderella outlet and free-standing stores for a minimum P1,500 single-receipt purchase are instantly qualified to join the raffle promo.

A raffle for 50 winners will be drawn on March 15, 2007, with each winner enjoying a shopping spree worth P10,000. Contestants can win more than once!

Cinderella has over 200 brands under its umbrella, including international fashion labels Esprit, British India, U2, Nafnaf, Rampage, Pierre Cardin and local brands Seventeen, C Women and C-Kids.

DRESS with color and drama this season. Cinderella offers items that can be styled in a multitude of ways.

COLOUR Collection Metallic Eyeshadow Palette, with frosted shades that you can mix and match

COLOUR Collection Mascara in Blackest Black or Brown

Smoky eyes for the holidays

THIS YULETIDE SEASON, glam up by giving your eyes some makeover to make a smoky, tantalizing statement.

Colour Collection, from Sara Lee Direct Selling, Inc., one of the country's leading direct-selling companies, shares tips on how to get intensely defined, immensely expressive eyes for the holidays.

Create a flawless, smoky look with Colour Collection Metallic Eyeshadow Palette, with frosted shades that you can mix and match to achieve that dramatic effect.

Be experimental with your eyeliner by using Colour Collection Retractable Eyeliner in Blue or Silver. Just line your bottom eyelid about halfway for smaller eyes, or go nearly to the inner corner for larger eyes.

Smudge to leave a shadowy definition. Then line your top lid using Colour Collection Black Liquid Eyeliner.

Finally, use Colour Collection Mascara in Blackest Black or Brown. Apply the mascara to roots of lashes to add color and depth, and give the illusion of larger eyes.

BPI Express Credit
Give triple happiness with triple spending power:
With BPI Express Credit, enjoy up to three times your regular credit limit and real 0% interest on your S.I.P. purchases this holiday season.
BPI We'll take you farther
REAL 0%
S.I.P.
Promo period: October 15, 2006 to January 15, 2007

A season for romance and elegance

ROMANCE AND EASY ELEGANCE CHARACterize global fashion brand Laurèl's Fall/Winter 2006 collection.

Mix casual with classic designs for magnificent contrasts in fabrics, cut or styling. You can create a playful yet feminine look which will take you from day-time family gatherings to an evening rendezvous.

Narrow pants or voluminous skirts are perfect with Laurèl's small jackets and blazers with stand-up collars. Ultra feminine tops are charming on masculine pants in dark-blue or raw denim with hammered metal buttons.

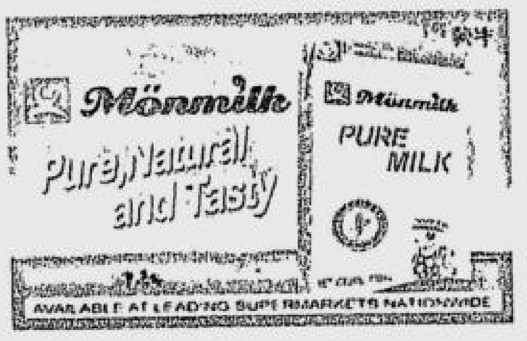
Epaulets, belts and ribbons make this collection of quiet colors— black, graphite and dark brown—edgier.

Romantic and detail-rich skirts and tailored jackets evoke scenes from Hitchcock films. Fragile and tonal, the collection showcases femininity at its best.

Laurèl's new approach to design creates light and airy elegance that projects a new image for tailoring. The Fall/Winter collection combines color, cut, style and contrasting elements to create a fresh, feminine look for the modern woman.

The Laurèl shop is at 3/L, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong.

LAUREL lets you exude edgy sophistication and femininity in a dramatically embellished aubergine top and matching pants.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AVAILABLE AT LEADING SUPERMARKETS NATIONWIDE

ESCADA
INTO THE BLUE
femme
BOSS

EXPRESSIONS of true femininity and *joie de vivre* in Femme by Boss and Escada Into the Blue

Yuletide 'scent-iments'

CAUGHT IN A WHIRL OF YULETIDE FESTIVITIES—parties, reunions and all manner of socials, looking and smelling good ranks high on everyone's agenda. Smelling good, more importantly, because at no other time of the year do people hug and kiss as many friends and relatives as possible in record time! Now is the perfect occasion to go scent-hunting, what with the chilly December breeze setting the ambiance for that pleasurable quest—picking a new signature scent befitting a loved one, a friend or even one's self.

Rustan Marketing Corporation, exclusive distributor of various brands, offers the finest array of premium fragrances for this season. Indulge in these delightful olfactory concoctions from respected fashion giants—Gucci, Givenchy, Nina Ricci, Carolina Herrera, Elizabeth Arden, Escada, Kenzo, Anna Sui, Lacoste, Hugo Boss and Alfred Dunhill. Somewhere out there is a scent that perfectly fits a head-strong and confident girlfriend, a loving mom, a workaholic boss, a dapper uncle, a metrosexual brother…the list is endless!

For young and vivacious women who exude that beguiling child-woman appeal, choices abound: Anna Sui's Secret Wish Magic Romance—an enchanting fruity floral fragrance that captures the heady rush of first love. The blend of bergamot, Sicilian lemon, melon, Orange blossom, tuberose, jasmine, lotus blossom, rosewood, coconut amber and musk encapsulates the romantic menagerie of emotions within every young girl on the throes of womanhood and romance; Nina by Nina Ricci, is as tempting as ever from its apple-shaped bottle to its fruity scent, which uniquely blends Calibrian lemon, Caipirinah lime with peony, moonflower, apple wood, white cedar and for the very first time, toffee apple. Evoking beauty, charm and happiness, this luscious fragrance captures the enchantment and magic of the Yuletide season; Lacoste Inspiration personifies a relentless thirst for life. This feminine, floral scent, which combines pomegranate, tuberose and jasmine brings out one's vibrant, flirtatious and playful side; and Flower by Kenzo is an Oriental floral that marries sweet and sensual elements with its harmonious combination of almond, white musk, oppoponax resin, bourbon vanilla, parma violet and Bulgarian rose.

Young, vibrant, cosmopolitan couples will surely love Carolina Herrera's 212 On Ice for men and women. The twin scents are virtual alter egos, mirroring each other's distinct yet complementary appeal. 212 on Ice for women is an eclectic fragrance spiked with hints of grapefruit, tangerine, rose and peony. 212 on Ice for men combines orange blossom, tangerine, nutmeg, coriander, musk and sandalwood. These are truly refreshing scents that fit perfectly in the lifestyle of hip and youthful urbanites.

Femme fatales who know the power of their allure and sensuality can take their pick from—Gucci Eau de Parfum II, a sensual scent that exudes sexiness with its heady mix of violet, blackberry, musk, jasmine, heliotrope and wood, a truly expressive fragrance for the sophisticated and self-assured woman; Givenchy's Amarige Mariage befits the captivating December bride in her delicate, pristine beauty. Presented in a flacon shaped like a wedding band and borne from the classic Givenchy scent, Mariage epitomizes newlywed bliss in a feminine scent that unites fruity, citrus and floral notes; the awakening scent of Elizabeth Arden Green Tea Revitalize is a calming blend of green tea with herbal and citrus notes—any woman worth her salt would appreciate this refreshing treat for the senses amidst the holiday frenzy.

Two newly-launched fragrances appeal to the ultra feminine chic, those who are motivated by their inner joy and radiate confidence, optimism and effortless grace. Evoking *joie de vivre*—a tribute to a woman's joys and triumphs, is Escada's Into the Blue, a casually elegant floral fragrance, which features the blue lotus flower, Nymphea blended with notes of watermelon, peony and wet woods. It's the perfect gift for every confident, beautiful and optimistic woman. Hugo Boss's Femme by BOSS is a modern fragrance for the equally modern woman who exudes glamour, sheer elegance, individuality and true femininity. It is for the woman who has achieved much, who is settled and secure, every inch a picture of blissful contentment. The scent is a fruity and floral blend of tangerine, black currant, and delicate white flowers stephanotis, oriental lily and Bulgarian rose petals, tempered with creamy musk notes.

The men couldn't be far behind with these options—Hugo Boss's Selection is the perfect scent for the suave, successful and sophisticated man. Its masculine blend of grapefruit, mandarin, pink peppercorn, cedar lead, cedar wood, patchouli, vetiver and musk is a powerful yet sensual cocktail for the senses.

Dunhill Pure suits a man who exudes a perfect blend of tradition and modernity. He is refined and sophisticated, conservative yet defies convention in unexpected ways, a natural leader who exudes power. This fresh scent of lotus leaves and water iris blends seamlessly with stronger notes of white pepper and cardamom as well as invigorating musk and amber.

Finally, Lacoste's take on a new kind of masculinity gives expression to Lacoste Essential, a fragrance meant for the "new essentialists"—men who treasure freedom and are naturally stylish and value quality. An intriguing blend of tomato leaves, citrus, fruity aromas, roses and black pepper, Lacoste Essential makes for a truly sensual, full-bodied fragrance.

All fragrances are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and available at leading department stores nationwide.

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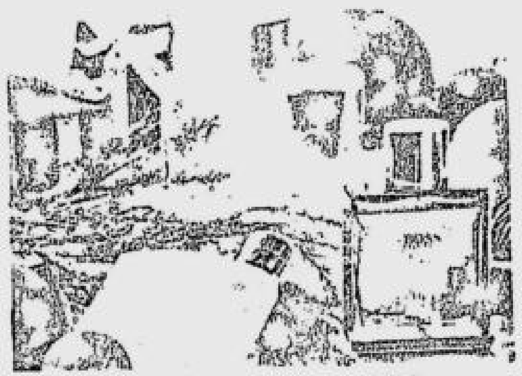
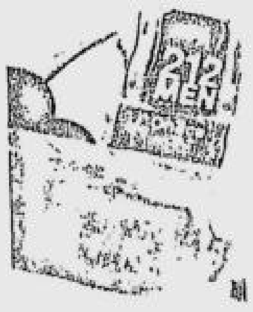


THE MANLIEST of scents—Dunhill Pure, Boss Selection and Lacoste Essential



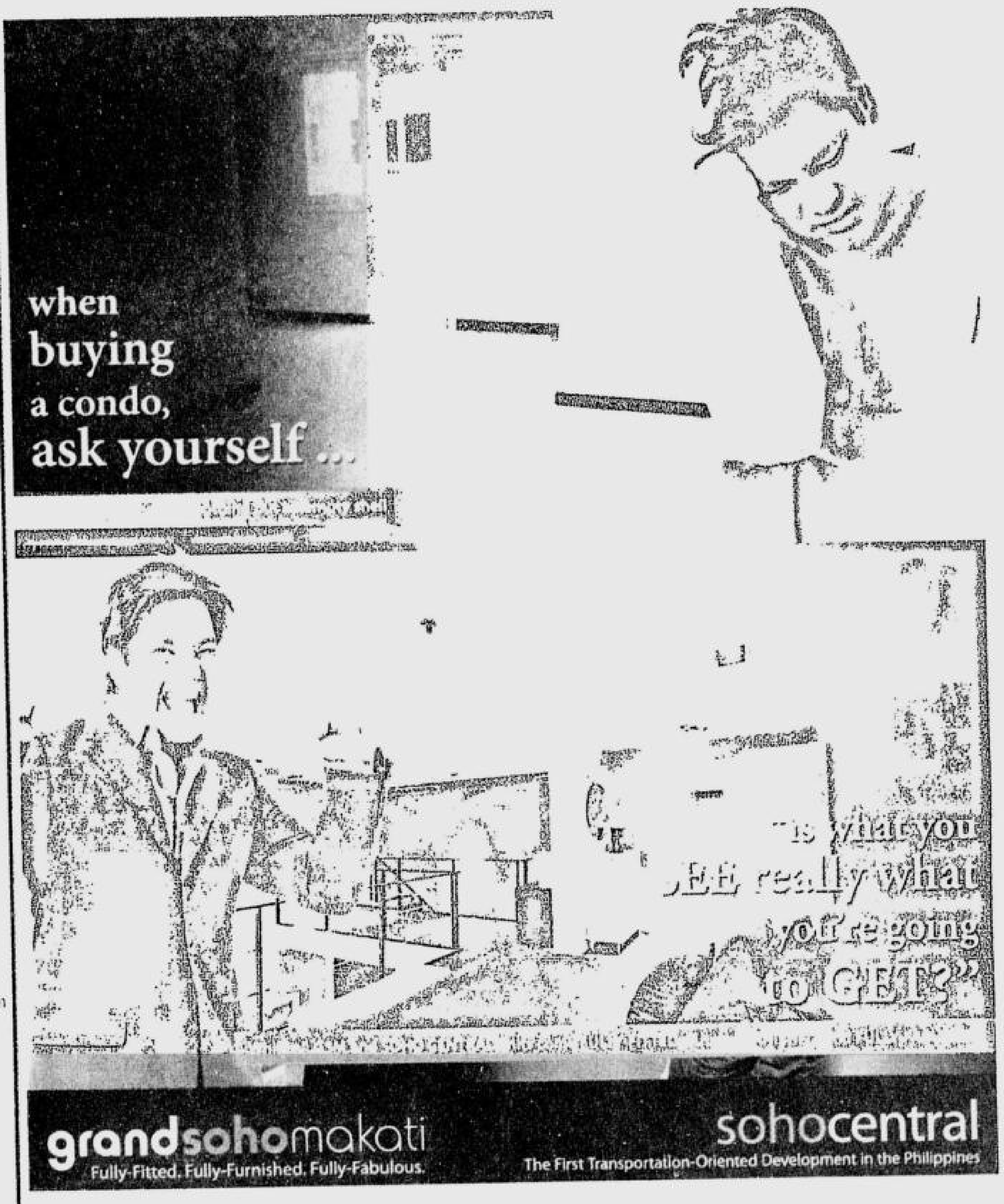
YOUNG and hip couples unite with 212 On Ice for Men and Women.

FLIRTATIOUS collections! Anna Sui Secret Wish Magic Romance, Nina, Lacoste Inspiration, Flower by Kenzo

10 MORE REASONS TO OWN A CONDO AT GRAND SOHO MAKATI

1. Live in the heart of Makati
Grand Soho Makati (GSM) is Century Properties' latest Fully-Fitted, Fully-Furnished luxury boutique development, and in the most prestigious and valuable real estate area in the country: the Makati Golden Triangle. (flanked by Ayala, Buendia and Makati Avenues)
2. Fully-Fitted, Fully-Furnished, Fully Fabulous
Grand Soho Makati is designed by the same interior design team behind Essensa East Forbes at the Fort (voted by Asiaweek Magazine as the best residential condominium in the country) to give you stylish units that come in three exceptional interior design options Modern, Sleek and Contemporary.
3. 24-hour Concierge Services
GSM goes the extra mile by pioneering 24-hour concierge services that assist residents with transportation needs, restaurant and show reservations, laundry services, magazine subscriptions, mailing letters, messaging, bill payments or just about anything that they might need.
4. Taking loft living to the next level
Loft living has proven to be a popular option for the condo dweller who desires the feeling of space within condo conditions. For residents who want something even more distinctive, the Skyloft is the ideal upgrade. GSM's Skylofts are townhouses in the sky that open out into the breathtaking infinity pool.
5. Top-notch facilities
Grand Soho Makati was conceived with the urban-dweller in mind with best of breed amenities like a world-class fitness center, full-service spa, infinity pool, indoor children's playground, day-care center, business center, an owner's lounge and more.
6. Multimedia library and THX viewing room
GSM offers pioneering concepts like an extensive book and magazine library with everything from the latest bestsellers to contemporary fashion and lifestyle magazines, and an up-to-date DVD library View movies in your own home or in the state of the art THX viewing room available exclusively to GSM residents.
7. Extra storage space
Space is the ultimate commodity for hi-rise living, and at GSM, special storage areas at the parking level are made available to keep your home clutter free. Travel luggage, bulky boxes, golf clubs, and other items now can be stowed away for later use.
8. A selection of the hippest retail, dining and banking establishments
While GSM's prime location guarantees full access to the exhilarating Makati lifestyle, residents will benefit from the posh mix of establishments poised to set up shop in a special retail level in the building.
9. Salcedo attraction
GSM is located within Salcedo Village in Makati. Famous for its European-style Saturday Market, quaint restos and one-of-a-kind designer boutiques, this friendly neighborhood treats its residents with the distinct charm unique only to the area.
10. A dream investment
Compared to its competitors, GSM gives its buyers optimum value for money (priced up to 43% cheaper than other similar developments) as all buyers become co-developers and payments of VAT, documentary stamps and transfer fees are waived. With rates as low as P12,000 per month, there is no other offer more fabulous than Grand Soho Makati.

For more information regarding Grand Soho Makati, dial 818-9025, 893-7050, 0915-700-2000 or log on to www.gsmcondo.com


when buying a condo, ask yourself …
"is what you SEE really what you're going to GET?"
grandsohomakati
Fully-Fitted. Fully-Furnished. Fully-Fabulous.
sohocentral
The First Transportation-Oriented Development in the Philippines

All other condo projects sugarcoat the deal with promises of fancy model units fashioned by big-name interior designers. But come turnover time, the real deal is revealed – an empty unit, with the most primitive of fittings and furnishings, if any at all.

Century Properties, the creators of the award-winning **Essensa East Forbes** now offers the last remaining choice units of the highly acclaimed **Grand Soho Makati (GSM)** and **Soho Central in Ortigas.**

Anticipated as two of the metro's most coveted boutique residences, **GSM** and **Soho Central** allow you embrace a lifestyle of modern luxury with their elegantly-styled, **Fully-Fitted, Fully-Furnished, and Fully-Fabulous units**, where every room -- from the living space, to the bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen -- is completely interior-designed, down to the last detail by our award-winning design team.

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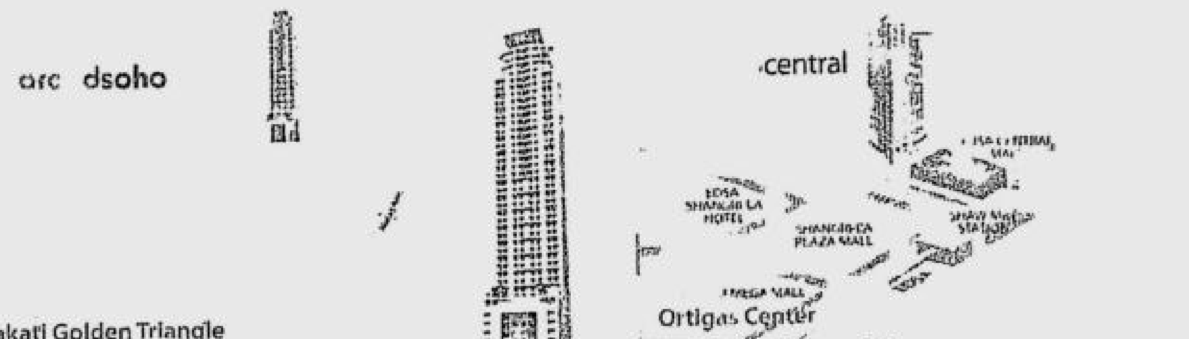
Ownership starts for as low as USD $280 a month. Visit our model units today at the 2nd level (Low Rise Wing) **Pacific Star Building,** Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., cor. Makati Ave., Makati City.



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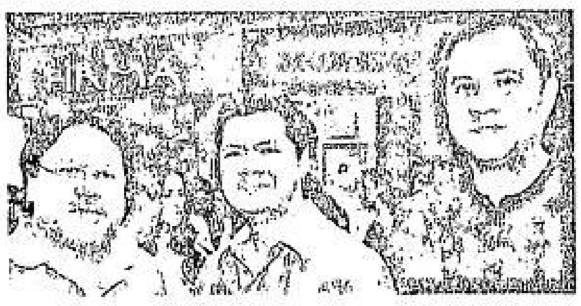
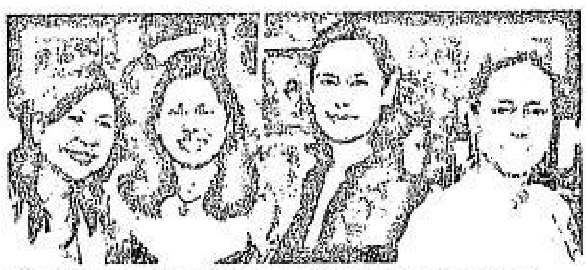
FIRMA'S hosts Chito Vijandre and Ricky Toledo in their Japanese outfits

THE FUN GANG. Joy Zapanta del Rosario, Anton Barretto, Leah Puyat and Angelette Calero

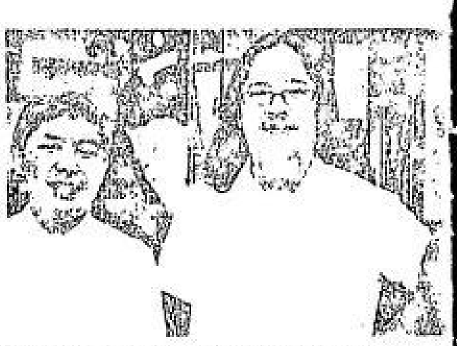
SIGALIT Djemal with eye-catching cousin Rochel Balulu; and her gorgeous daughter Metav Djemal



MARI Lagdameo with Norby Ong and Choy Cojuangco of Boracay's popular Asia Resort

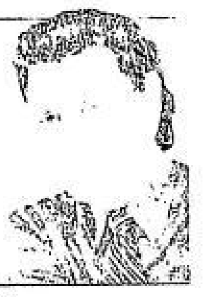


SILK Cocoon's Jeannie Goulbourn and daughter Katrina G. Feist; and the Panlilio sisters, Pamela Valdes and Vicky Claparols



CHITO Vijandre, Anthony and Joey Yup.

Japanese Floating-World art



WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

TRUST THAT POPULAR AND CHIC home store Firma and the Ayala Center's Greenbelt to bring art to where more people get to see it: at the mall, *naturellement*, *palanggas*.

Firma organized the *tres* elegant exhibition of 17th-19th century Japanese paintings and woodlock prints, titled "The Floating World," at the Greenbelt 3 lobby.

During the opening, live *koto* music played in the background, and we were transported to the world of "shoguns; samurais; courtesans and kabuki characters," all masterfully executed in the artworks by renowned Japan artists.

Firma's brilliant partners, **Chito Vijandre** and **Ricky Toledo**, welcomed us, wearing their authentic "hakana trousers" and wooden *geta* clogs.

The guests included some of the town's top designers, artist and art enthusiasts.

Hot interior designer and PDI columnist **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** could very well have been the hostess of the event herself. She breezed in garbed in complete geisha makeup and updated kimono by talented Cebu designer **Ronald Enrico**.

The glam **Wynn Wynn Ong** used three gold brooches of sculpted willow leaves with gemstones to accent her top; she also wore a hair comb of cherry blossoms and pearls set in gold, all of her own design, *natch*!

M Atellier's **Mia Borromeo** updated her kimono top from Kyoto with cropped jeans.

Lulu Tan Gan wore one of her own Japanese-inspired colorful knits.

Surface designer, gorgeous **Tats Manahan**, glided gracefully in her Yohji Yamamoto wrap skirt, talking about her grand passion of the moment: "the restoration of the Immaculate Conception church in Pasig."

The gorgeous Panlilio sisters, **Pamela Valdes** and **Vicky Claparols**, were *tres* chic as always, dahlings, telling us that Vogue favorite **Bea Valdes** "has just come back from London... where they can't seem to have enough of her bags."

Just then, Bea V. burst into the scene with her dashing boyfriend, young entrepreneur **Archie Rodriguez**. She was wearing effortlessly the highest pair of Louboutin heels anyone had ever seen.

With Cherry Bellinis, and the bubbly flowing all night long, it was a Floating World indeed, *palanggas*, with fine art and the best company.

Adidas' hip-hop nights

On a Wednesday night, we packed the Embassy Club for a taste of hip-hop courtesy of the hip-and-hopping Adidas, *natch*.

Guess what, all those wearing Adidas Originals got in for free!

Adidas is one of the pioneers in hip-hop fashion, with the Adidas Originals Line. A part of the collection has long been associated with hip-hop, including Missy Elliot and her own Respect ME collection of sneakers, tops, head wear and bags.

High-profile night owls shaking and rocking included models **Will DeVaughn** and **Brent Javier**, actor **Marvin Agustin** and Drinie Aguilar, and hip-hop figures **Mojo Jojo** and **Andi 9**.

Doughnuts!

It's amazing how our town just can't get enough of the yummy-yummy Krispy Kreme Doughnuts, *palanggas*.

Moi can't forget how in the past how tons of *balikbayan* or vacationers from the US waved boxes and boxes of Krispy Kreme for their friends and *famille* back home.

Moi should know—I carried several boxes every time I got back from the US and Sydney, Australia, for my favorite pepperoni, who would ask nothing else but Krispy Kreme.

Well, dahlings, now Krispy Kreme is just a smooth ride away after the opening of their flagship store at Bonifacio High Street, The Fort, *palanggas*.

It had to be the Max's Fried Chicken *famille* that clinched the franchise of America's most sweet sensation doughnuts. And from the looks of it, with 30 awesome stores to open in the next five years, the Philippines will be another Krispy Kreme country.

In fact, dahlings, the Manille opening broke all Asian records, toppling Krispy Kreme openings in Korea, Hong Kong and Indonesia, with at least 3,000 people lining up on the first day to get their Original Glazed doughnut fix!

Handsome young achiever **Jim T. Fuentebella**, hotshot chair of the Real American Doughnut Co. Inc., the Philippine franchise holder of this doughnut, welcomed the invitees to the Krispy Kreme VIP night at flagship store with wife, gorgeous **Mavis Manotoc**, and son **Diego**.

Looking absolutely happy over the opening mob were **Jeff Welch**, Krispy Kreme Int'l. senior vice president for development and international franchise; **Jim Rogers**, international marketing director; and **Chris Joseph**, division director for the Asia Pacific, who all jetted into town for the sweet occasion, *palanggas*.

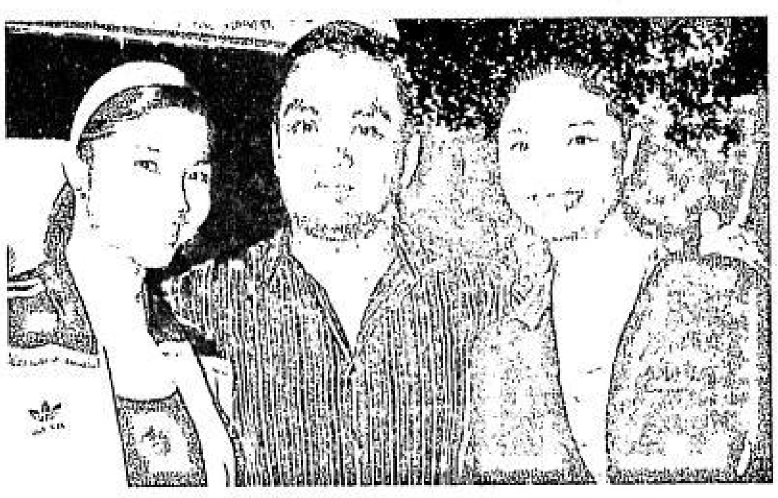
The entire Max's clan was here, there and everywhere helping entertained the guests, *natch*!

Digging into the smashing doughnuts were hotshot namedroppables such as good-looking Taguig Mayor **Freddie Tinga** and fashionable **Kaye Tinga**; Shopwise's **Donnie Tantoco** and kids; hunky **Piolo Pascual**, Max's Fried Chicken super endorser; porcelain beauty **Lucy Torres-Gomez** and daughter **Juliana**; designers **Randy Ortiz** and **Arturo Go**; lensman **Patrick Uy**; fashionista **Cecile Zamora** and husband, chef **Jeroen**; stunningly gorgeous models **Tweetie de Leon**, **Bubbles Paraiso**, **Bianca Valerio** and **Cathy Santamaria-Escano**, all bean-thin, yet they couldn't get enough of Krispy Kreme.

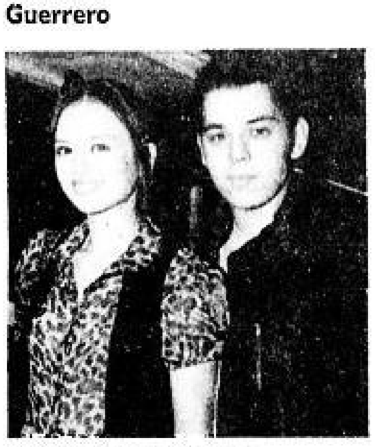
Getting their sweet share were my next-door neighbor **Joanna Ongpin-Duarte** and **Vicky Jalandoni** of the Big & Small Co.; **Marissa Cojunagco-Lopa**, **Pin Guingona**, cager **Jojo Lastimosa**, entrepreneur **Angelette Calero**, **Leah Puyat** and **Anton Barretto**, beautiful couple **Raul Francisco** and **Joanna Preysler**, and the nicer Manotoc brother, **T.J.**, *palanggas*.

Krispy Kreme opened its second store yesterday in SM Megamall Building B.

Hey, I'm running to the next opening faster than you can say, "Where are you going?" To Krispy Kreme, *naturellement*.



IT'S all about Adidas. Goody Custodio, sports marketing manager of Adidas Philippines, with badminton twins Rachel and Raquel Guerrero

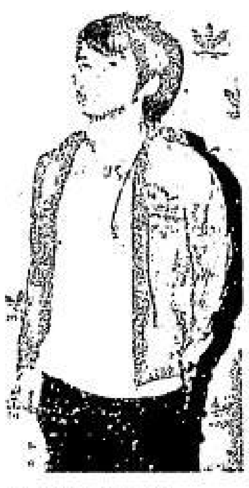


BEAUTIFUL twosome. Georgina Wilson and Richard Gutierrez

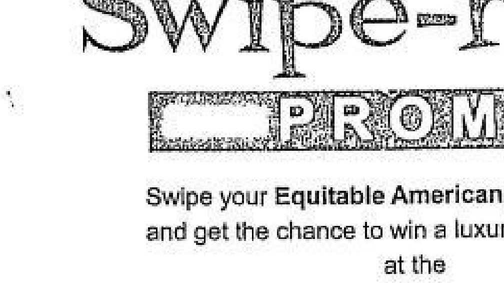
BASKETBALL pro Larry Fonacier and Lora Gahol

BASKETBALL pro Wesley Gonzales

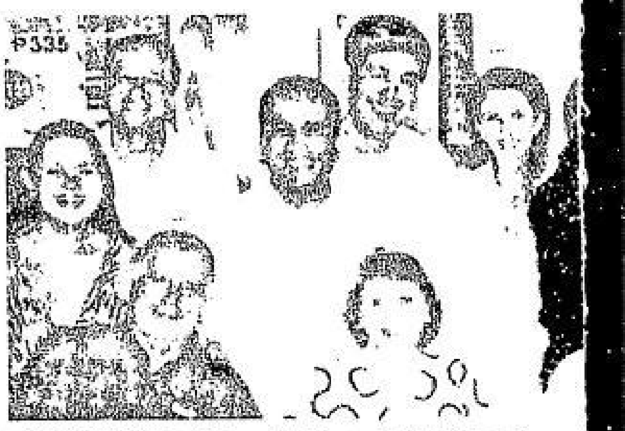
ONE of the hottest hosts on air, DJ Mo Twister of "Good Times with Mo"



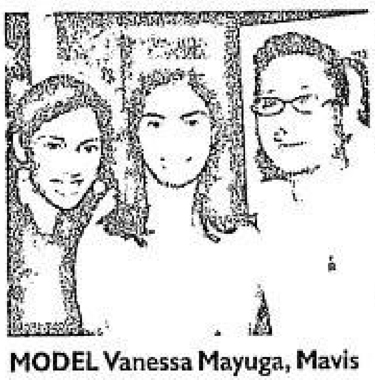
YAEL Yuzon of Spongecola



KRISPY Kreme diehards. Butchick Lastimosa and daughters CD, Kitkat and Boodie



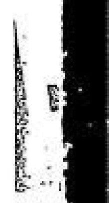
THE ENTIRE Max's *famille*. Seated: Bill Walsh, Loree
Standing: Rica and Robert Trota, Jimmy Trota, Budd
Fuentebella, Jim and Mavis Fuentebella, and Sharon



MODEL Vanessa Mayuga, Mavis Pijuan Manotoc and Teddy Manotoc

RUSTAN'S Donni Tantoco and so

PEN
fab



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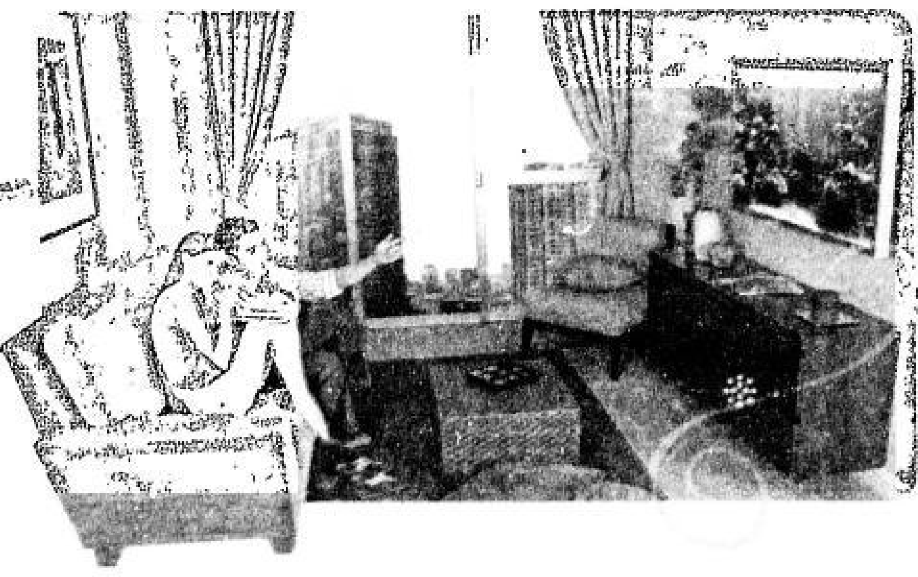


BEST COPY AVAILABLE

JAPANESE art lovers. Lizette Cojuangco, Tats Manahan, Mia Borromeo, George Drysdale, Ginny de Guzman and Annie Young

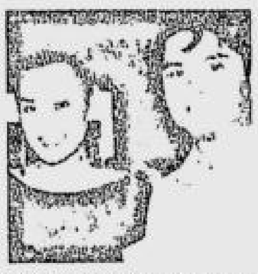
ngco

LULU Tan Gan and Tessa Prieto-Valdes

NY Lim and the lous Evelyn Lim Forbes

NINI Licaros and Mary Anne Borromeo

ETIE de Leon poses beside Krispy Kreme poster.

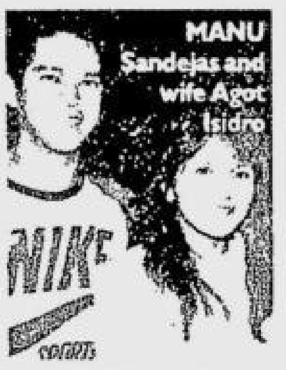


BEAUTY queen Carlene Aguilar and Rep. Miles Roces

MODEL Bubbles Paraiso

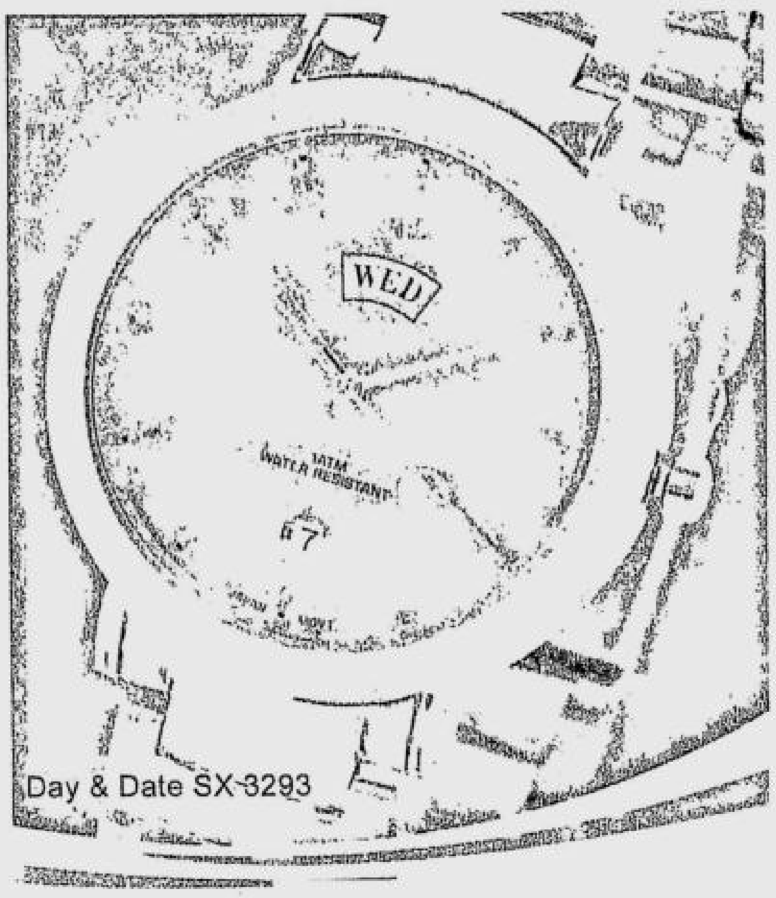
n Trota, Plaridel and Erlinda Trota-Fuentebella. and Cristina Garcia, Carolyn and Jog Salud, Dave Fuentebella

e



MANU Sandejas and wife Agot Isidro

LUCY Torres-Gomez and daughter Juliana



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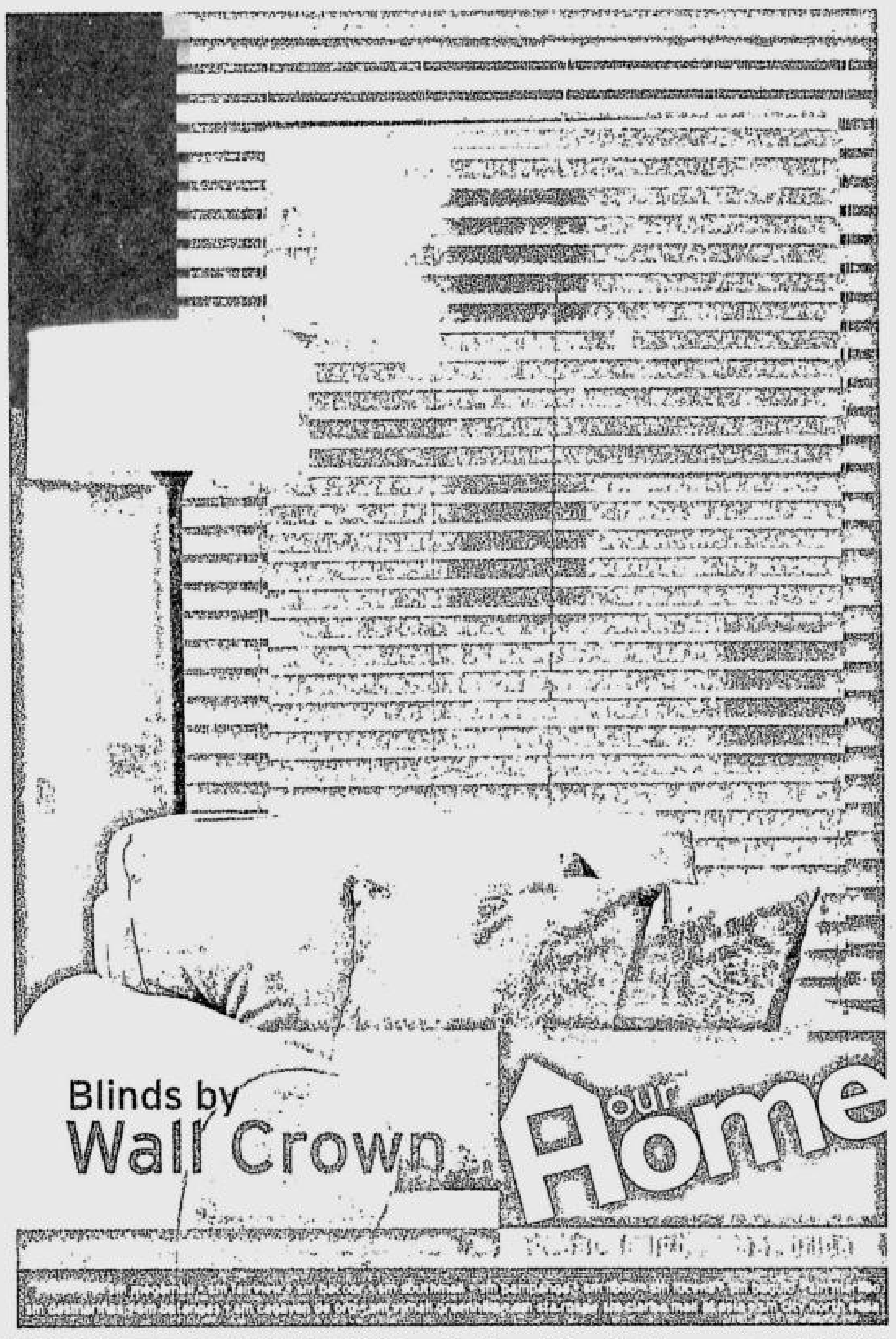
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4659 Series of 2006

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Sole sensations

VIA Venetto's dressy pumps with sling-back and buckle

STUNNING strappy crisscross Swarovski shoes

VIA VENETTO CELEBRATES FILIPINO craftsmanship with its latest collection of footwear. The brand has long stood for Filipino creativity, producing world-class pieces that marry style and function.

Via Venetto's classic leather shoes as well as its dressy line of Swarovski-embellished footwear by jewelry designer Inky Nakpil boasts of highly embellished designs that combine the crystals with beads, mesh and metal.

In wearable shades of gold, silver and black, the Swarovski collection can go from daytime, with simpler styles like a mesh and crystal silver thong sandal or a gold thong with large, multifaceted crystals, which both have lower heels, or nighttime, with higher styles like a gold, open-toe sandal with a brooch-like, crystal detail that combines many-sized stones.

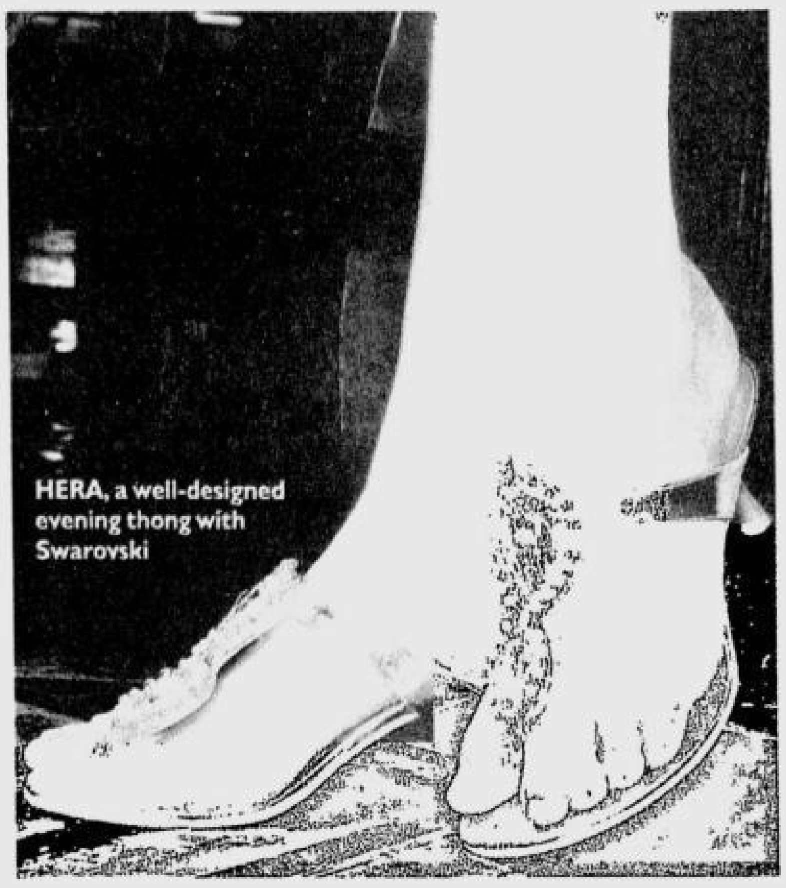
Via Venetto is the only Filipino shoe brand licensed to use the brand Swarovski, and every pair in the collection carries this tag of authenticity.

The leather shoes are updated classics with simple details like a delicate peephole on pumps, top stitching, wedge heels and combined textures like suede with leather.

The Swarovski shoes are glamorous yet youthful at the same time. These glimmering pieces can complement a sleek, evening gown as much as a simple, daytime shift dress, as these shoes can function as an outfit centerpiece in the same way jewelry does. Via Venetto's shoes are not meant to go unnoticed. More than just completing one's outfit, they make the outfit.

These highly durable shoes also carry a lifetime warranty, which is unique to Via Venetto. The brand was built on the tradition of creating simple yet superior shoe wear that takes world-class materials like Austrian Swarovski crystals and Italian kidskin leather, and fashioning them with a nod to the Filipino's unique eye for style and durability.

Via Venetto stores are located at Glorietta 1, Greenbelt 1, SM Megamall and Alabang Town Center.



HERA, a well-designed evening thong with Swarovski

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WHITE sleeveless fur vest worn with black long-sleeve turtleneck top

Fashion fur-cast

LONG ASSOCIATED WITH GLAMOUR and elegance, fur today takes on younger, fresher shapes and colors, with soft leopard and raccoon prints leading the way.

The new-generation furs are designed as perfect accent pieces: wraps with satin bow wraps, as vests, capes, and collars, even as tank tops.

With cooler days ahead, wrap these fur pieces around a basic tee or tank top. Or wear a fur collar around a cardigan for a glam new look. Animal lovers need not worry as these are faux furs.

The collection is available at the Boutique Square department of all SM stores.

SPAGHETTI-STRAP tank top with bow and leopard-inspired faux fur accent

RED faux fur wrap with bow tie worn with black long-sleeve top and denim jeans

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Contributing editor
Ria Francisco-Prieto

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Found: relaxation in a store

HAVE YOU HEARD of Marionnaud? If you haven't, it is a one-stop beauty hub that carries many cosmetic brands, and it even has a spa called Decleor where you can indulge yourself in.

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

That's what I did when I got there. I think I got so overwhelmed with all the products on display. I left my Christmas list at home, but since coming home with an empty pocket because of all the exciting new products I was seeing was too scary, I figured I should just take off and buy goodies the next time.

Fortunately for me, I bumped into a girl who just stepped out of the Decleor treatment room.

She was glowing, and I got jealous. To cut the long story short, I ended up getting three treatments, and it was the best thing I did for myself in about three months.

I figured I needed a facial, so I tried the Aroma Skincare Facial. First, I was given a back massage using aromessence relax balm. Its active ingredients are myrrh, sandalwood, frankincense, essential oils and macadamia, red palm and shea butter. I was thinking, wow, how Christmas-y!

Then came the cleansing part and removal of makeup, including the toning part. After that, my face was exfoliated using Phytopeel, which removes dead skin cells, purifies and brightens the face, and absorbs impurities.

The part I enjoyed the most came next: aromapressure, followed by aromadrainage/aromassage.

Aromapressure is a massage done on lymphatic pressure points. It's like acupuncture on the face minus the needles.

Since my skin type is normal/combination, the therapist suggested I try the aromessence neroli oil.

This is because the oil Marionaud uses on you is dependent on your skin type. The specific one used on me had an anti-dehydrating ingredient and an all-around line that would help my skin adjust to environmental conditions.

Then, with the use of Aromaessence in Essential Balm, which detoxifies, heals and rebalances for the maintenance of my normal skintone, the massage came in long strokes, apparently to drain the excess fluid on my face. The whole process was very relaxing, while the scents and the room itself added to the therapeutic experience.

The Aromaplasty Mask was the next stage in my very luxurious facial. The mask contains eight different types of cereal and oatmeal that heal and repair skin, are anti-bacterial and rich in nutrients, have anti-oxidants and also moisturize the skin. Yay!

The final step was the application of the day Hydra Floral cream. The cream is designed to immediately rehydrate and replenish the skin of its lost moisture, for continuous moisturizing.

I enjoyed the facial so much that I knew I had to try the body wrap. There were four programs to choose from: relax, activate, detoxify and tone.

I picked relax since the therapist said it would help destress, unwind and balance my well-being. Also, I actually liked that the essential oils used would include myrrh and frankincense, which would nicely match my facial. I figured that since the Christmas spirit hadn't hit me yet, it might at least do the work for me.

The treatment began with a body scrub using what felt like baby lotion with beads. The therapist used Decleor's signature long strokes and I felt like a baby being rocked to sleep. After about 20 minutes, I rinsed off the scrub then came for the back massage.

Holy essential oils were used and the long rocking rhythmic movement lulled me to sleep. I do know that my whole body was massaged using Aromaessence Relax Massage Balm, because at times when I was half-awake I'd ask the therapist what it was she was using on me.

After the massage, which also activated my skin, a sauna mask was applied on my body. I was wrapped in a plastic sheet for 20 minutes.

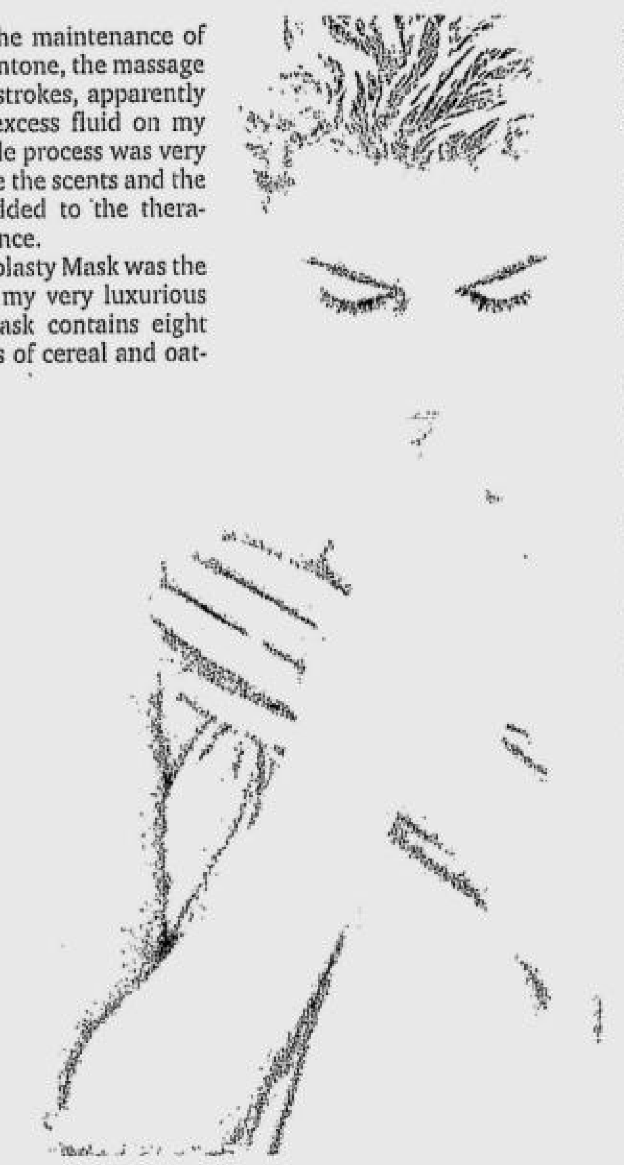
While wrapped thus, I was given a scalp massage, which put me to sleep again. In a few minutes, I woke up to take a shower, then the staff applied moisturizing and hydrating lotion all over my body. My skin and I never felt this good!

Since I was rejuvenated, relaxed and feeling really good, I indulged all the way and got myself a hand and foot treatment, too.

The foot massage started with a foot bath. The process for the hands and feet were pretty much the same, in fact: exfoliate, then massage with a nail protector called Aromaessence Ongles, which acts like a vitamin that strengthens and keeps the nails healthy while also making your hands and feet look younger.

The sauna mask and effleurages—a type of massage with circular motion—were the last steps of the treatments.

I don't know of one person who won't enjoy and benefit from Decleor's treatments. Gift checks for treatments are available, so if Decleor gift checks are all I get for Christmas, I won't complain one bit!



REJUVENATE before and after the festivities

Ethereal beauty

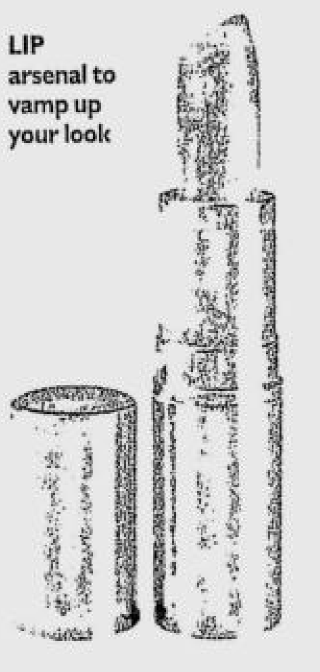
By Carla Sibal
Contributor

FRESH-FACED beauty using VMV's newly launched color palette makes for the prettiest day look.
Eyes: Chateau
Blush: Cabana Cutie
Lips: Have It All

FINDING THE RIGHT KIND of makeup is much like finding the right guy. There may be many to choose from, but they're not all good for you.

Having sensitive skin can make the difficult almost impossible. With pollutants all around us, and being in a tropical country bathed in the sun almost 365 days a year, we must be extra watchful about what we put on our face.

Having sensitive skin can also be a bit of challenge when opting to revamp your look for a special occasion. The "Jennifer Aniston fresh face" may not be as easy to achieve, especially when you're layering concealers one after the other. And as most pros declare, "The best foundation is really good skin."



LIP arsenal to vamp up your look

> If you'd like to look fresh-faced and not overdone, earth tones would be a good bet

So, priority should be to find cosmetics that will really "work" for your skin. That way, you get to have your cake and eat it, too!

Now, formulated with great skin in mind is VMV Hypoallergenics. Founded in 1979, VMV has been known for skincare products geared toward enhancing and maintaining skin health.

Spearheaded by internationally renowned dermatologist and dermapathologist Dr. Vermén Verallo-Rowell, VMV has always trumpeted the importance of good skin. Dr. Rowell has continually rallied behind the concept of using products that are skin-friendly, that ultimately lead to that radiant, youthful-looking glow.

Wonderful skin is essential for casting the right looks, and one must also have the right palette of colors to play with. That being the case, VMV recently launched its brand-new line of makeup and eye shadows. Hitting the runways first as the makeup sponsor at the Young Designers Competition held by Mega Magazine last October, the latest shades and hues were nothing less than glamtastic!

With the variety of themes and designers featured, VMV's new line of cosmetics followed every couture look with a rainbow palette. Mixing nudes and vibrant colors, Ixchel makeup artists creatively changed moods from subdued to the avant-garde.

Now, who said the skin-conscious would simply have to live with just a few shades? With a full array of neutral earth tones to sassy colors, VMV allows one to have a field day with colors. We can now use cosmetics freely without having to worry about allergies, allergens and harmful ingredients.

Great skin

Achieving great looks doesn't have to mean devastating the skin. Standing by its mantra of great skin from diapers to dermabrasion, VMV products are 100-percent all-types-of-fragrance-free. Apparently, very often allergic reactions to certain cosmetic brands can be traced to their core elements. Certain types of elements, dyes and fragrances cause adverse reactions on the skin, leading to severe itch, redness, even inflammation.

Mindful of these factors, VMV Cosmetics uses a VH-Rating System, which was formulated 20 years ago to rate how hypoallergenic each product is. The higher the VH rating, the less allergens are possibly present. To date, there are 27 known allergens published by the North American Contact Dermatitis. Over half of VMV's products boast of the highest VH-rating possible (VH-27).

To add to their impressive track record, VMV ingredients are proven to be 100-percent preservative-free, PABA-free (without organic chemicals known to irritate skin) and noncomedogenic (they won't clog pores).

THE "WHATATEASE" color palette for eyes perfectly enhances dramatic profiles for an evening look.
Eyes: Whatatease
Lips: Big O!
Glow in Baby Cheeks: Just Muted Cheeks!

POCKET-FRIENDLY lip and cheek tint

No excuse

As harassing as the holidays may be, that's still no excuse to look tired and exhausted for the after-hours parties. One must try to still look blooming even at night.

Learning to understand good skin care is a discipline that can have boundless benefits. Apart from cleansing, we must make sure that our skin is properly prepared and protected before even putting on makeup. If you know that you are going to be in and out of the sun all day, make sure you have sun protection.

When it comes to your face, put on a good foundation and combine it with muted colors, as Cecilee Rebollos of Ixchel has done on model *du jour* Helena Belmonte. If you'd like to look fresh-faced and not overdone, earth tones would be a good bet. Just a little blush and a tad of lipstick and you have that youthful glow.

For evenings, try experimenting by downplaying your cheeks. Concentrate color on the eyes and a little tint on the lips for a more sophisticated look. Add a few accessories, and you're ready to go morning, noon till night.

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Radiant skin for stressful holidays

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

BETWEEN ATTENDING dawn masses, meeting deadlines, performing double time for work, and going to endless Christmas parties, and shopping at the last minute, is there still time for sleep?

My face skin got dull, blotchy and dehydrated. We are all working on a budget this time of the year so I have reserved these road-tested and fairly reasonably priced items for such an article.

If you can spare the cash, it's okay to buy entire ranges because they are designed to work together for maximum results. For this reason I will include the prices of all items.

Neutrogena Fine Fairness line—Essential Soy is the active ingredient and it was discovered by Neutrogena to effectively and naturally nourish and lighten skin.

Trivia: Soy has also been found to slow down hair growth which is perfect for those with upper lip fuzz and women with bushy eyebrows who have to always wax and pluck.

The line may be more suitable to those with normal to dry skin, but may be too rich for very oily and acne-prone girls.

I did not break out, but my acne-prone skin got shiny really fast even if it did stay smooth.

I used the SPF 15 lotion for bedtime over the essence and the SPF 30 sunblock I used for daytime under the UV compact.

As always the compact is my favorite as it lightens and treats the skin while covering imperfections.

But I found the two shades suitable only for light (Light Beige) to medium-skinned (Natural Beige) women.

Standouts:

OLAY

Cleanser, P208; Toner, P318; Essence, P661.25; UV Compact powder foundation, P641. Other items: Lotion SPF 15, P425; Sunblock SPF 30, P610.25; Hydrating Mask, P152.75.

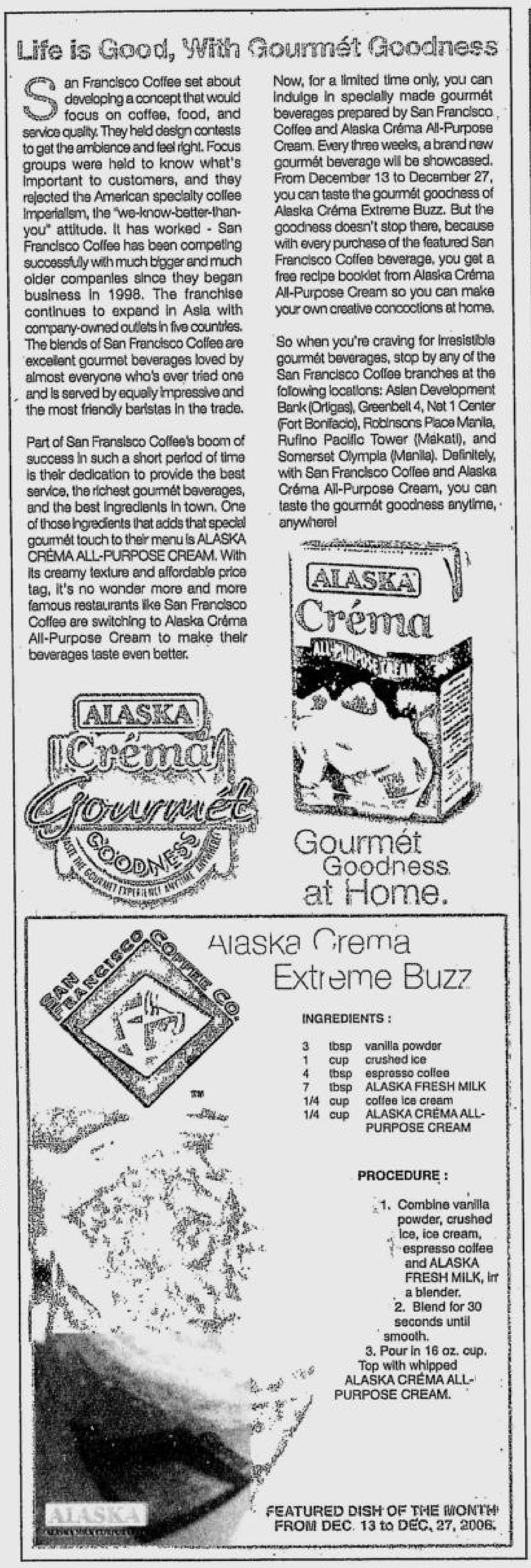
Olay Total effects + SPF 15 (P599)—Who has not seen the commercials with the beautiful celebrities?

Although I did not break out, the texture was a bit richer than what I would have wanted, so after two weeks, I only wore it at night.

I would wake up to soft baby skin and after the two-week mark, my skin did look brighter and firmer. I also did not need an eye cream.

RADIANT/ E4

NEUTROGENA Fine Fairness Line



Life is Good, With Gourmét Goodness

San Francisco Coffee set about developing a concept that would focus on coffee, food, and service quality. They held design contests to get the ambience and feel right. Focus groups were held to know what's important to customers, and they rejected the American specialty coffee imperialism, the "we-know-better-than-you" attitude. It has worked - San Francisco Coffee has been competing successfully with much bigger and much older companies since they began business in 1998. The franchise continues to expand in Asia with company-owned outlets in five countries. The blends of San Francisco Coffee are excellent gourmet beverages loved by almost everyone who's ever tried one and is served by equally impressive and the most friendly baristas in the trade.

Part of San Fransisco Coffee's boom of success in such a short period of time is their dedication to provide the best service, the richest gourmét beverages, and the best ingredients in town. One of those ingredients that adds that special gourmét touch to their menu is ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM. With its creamy texture and affordable price tag, it's no wonder more and more famous restaurants like San Francisco Coffee are switching to Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream to make their beverages taste even better.

Now, for a limited time only, you can indulge in specially made gourmét beverages prepared by San Francisco Coffee and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream. Every three weeks, a brand new gourmét beverage will be showcased. From December 13 to December 27, you can taste the gourmét goodness of Alaska Créma Extreme Buzz. But the goodness doesn't stop there, because with every purchase of the featured San Francisco Coffee beverage, you get a free recipe booklet from Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream so you can make your own creative concoctions at home.

So when you're craving for irresistible gourmét beverages, stop by any of the San Francisco Coffee branches at the following locations: Asian Development Bank (Ortigas), Greenbelt 4, Net 1 Center (Fort Bonifacio), Robinsons Place Manila, Rufino Pacific Tower (Makati), and Somerset Olympia (Manila). Definitely, with San Francisco Coffee and Alaska Créma All-Purpose Cream, you can taste the gourmét goodness anytime, anywhere!

ALASKA Créma Gourmét GOODNESS

Gourmét Goodness at Home.

SAN FRANCISCO COFFEE CO.

Alaska Crema Extreme Buzz

INGREDIENTS :

3 tbsp vanilla powder
1 cup crushed ice
4 tbsp espresso coffee
7 tbsp ALASKA FRESH MILK
1/4 cup coffee ice cream
1/4 cup ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM

PROCEDURE :

1. Combine vanilla powder, crushed ice, ice cream, espresso coffee and ALASKA FRESH MILK, in a blender.
2. Blend for 30 seconds until smooth.
3. Pour in 16 oz. cup. Top with whipped ALASKA CRÉMA ALL-PURPOSE CREAM.

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Promo period is from November 5 to December 31, 2006.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4907, Series of 2006.

Radiant skin for stressful holidays

From page E3

My friends with fine lines liked it as well and swore they saw results in their crow's feet and laugh lines. But they feel the result is not as great as that of the more expensive Olay Definity, which they all get from the US via free samples for now. I'm holding my breath for that one!

Mistine White Spa—This whitening product from Thailand is perfect for those with very oily skin as the items aren't greasy.

Everything, except for the whitening and anti-aging serum, is great for any age.

The whitening body line is just as super and the prices make them ideal for gifts.

Standouts: Roll-on (P69.75) has an ingredient that not only effectively whitens (Alpha Arbutin) but also smoothens (hydrolyzed wheat protein). It also contains soybean protein to slow down hair growth. Facial Foam (P129.75) keeps my face matte and pretty white after every washing. Whitening and Anti-age Serum SPF 15 (P429.75) actually faded pimple marks and lighter sun spots.

Other Items: Extra-whitening lotion (P179.75), which Lucy Torres uses; UV Cream, P229.75; and body scrub, P229.75, which I felt was a bit too gentle for results.

Pond's Age Miracle line with CLA—Targeted for women who are 35 years old and above. All the items in the line were great, but the major standouts for me were the toner (P229), cream 50ml (P499) and eye cream (P349).

The seven-day-result claim was true. Pores seemed smaller, skin more even-toned and felt more dewy and hydrated.

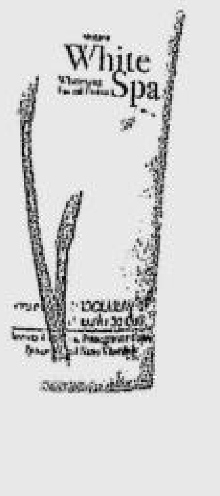
Unless your skin is very dry and/or wrinkled or you intend to stay in a very cold country, you can do away with the serum which tends to make the line-free skin seem puffy.

The cream was surprisingly sufficient as the spot-fading action is found here, not in the serum.

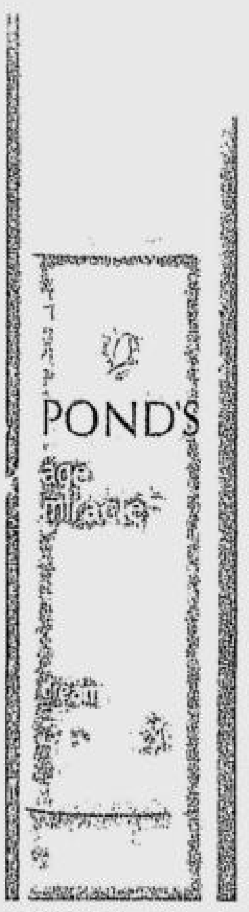
All items available at Watson's, drugstores, and other establishments

Mistine
White Spa
Whitening & Anti-Aging Serum

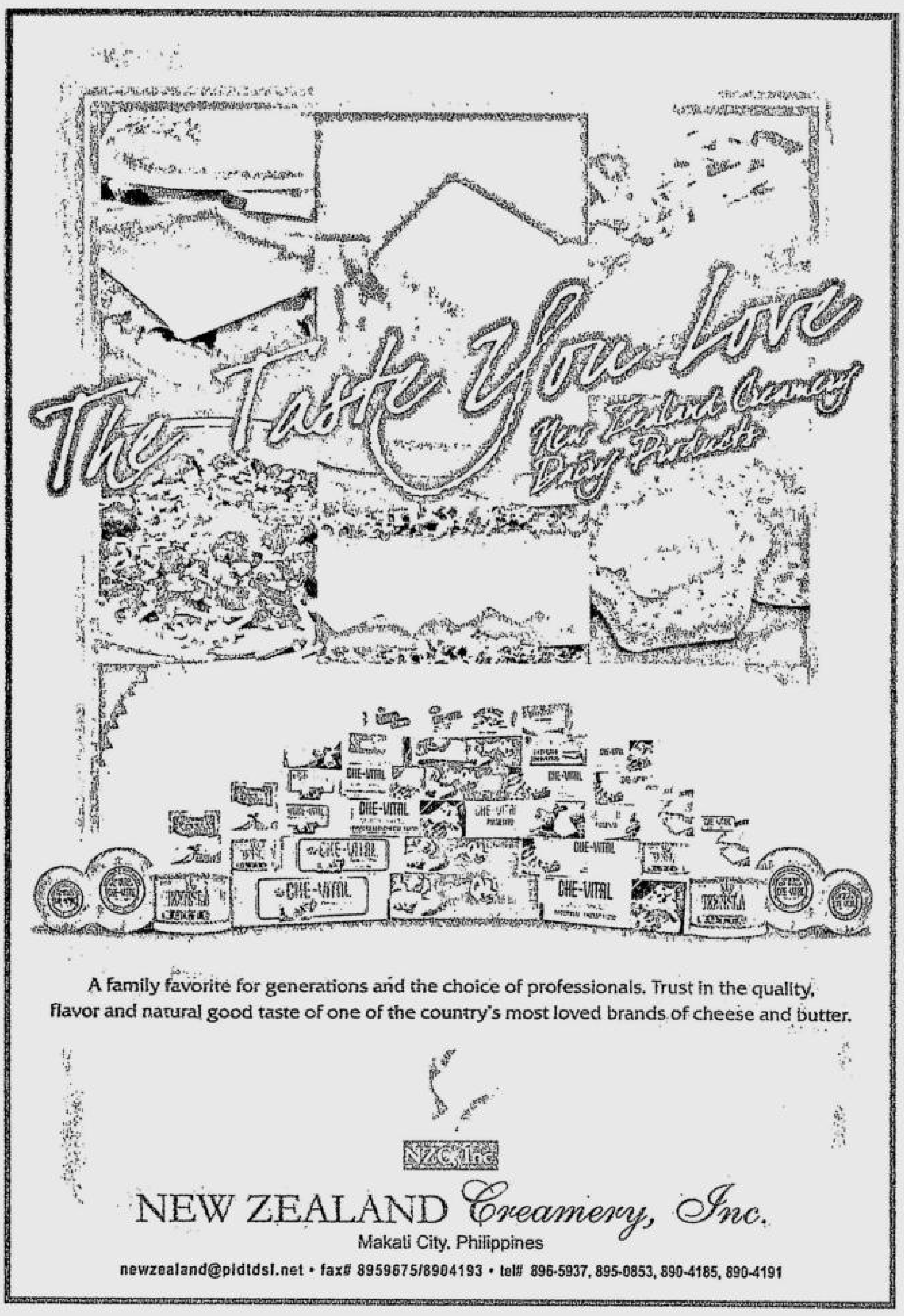
MISTINE whitening and anti-aging serum



MISTINE whitening facial foam



POND'S Age Miracle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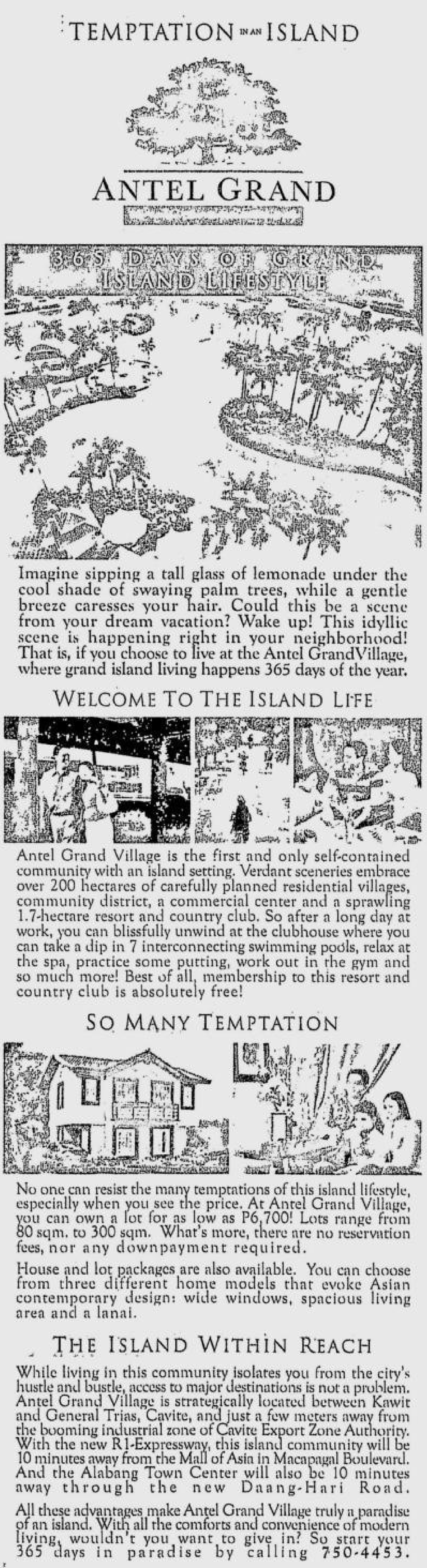
TEMPTATION IN AN ISLAND

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No one can resist the many temptations of this island lifestyle, especially when you see the price. At Antel Grand Village, you can own a lot for as low as P6,700! Lots range from 80 sqm. to 300 sqm. What's more, there are no reservation fees, nor any downpayment required.

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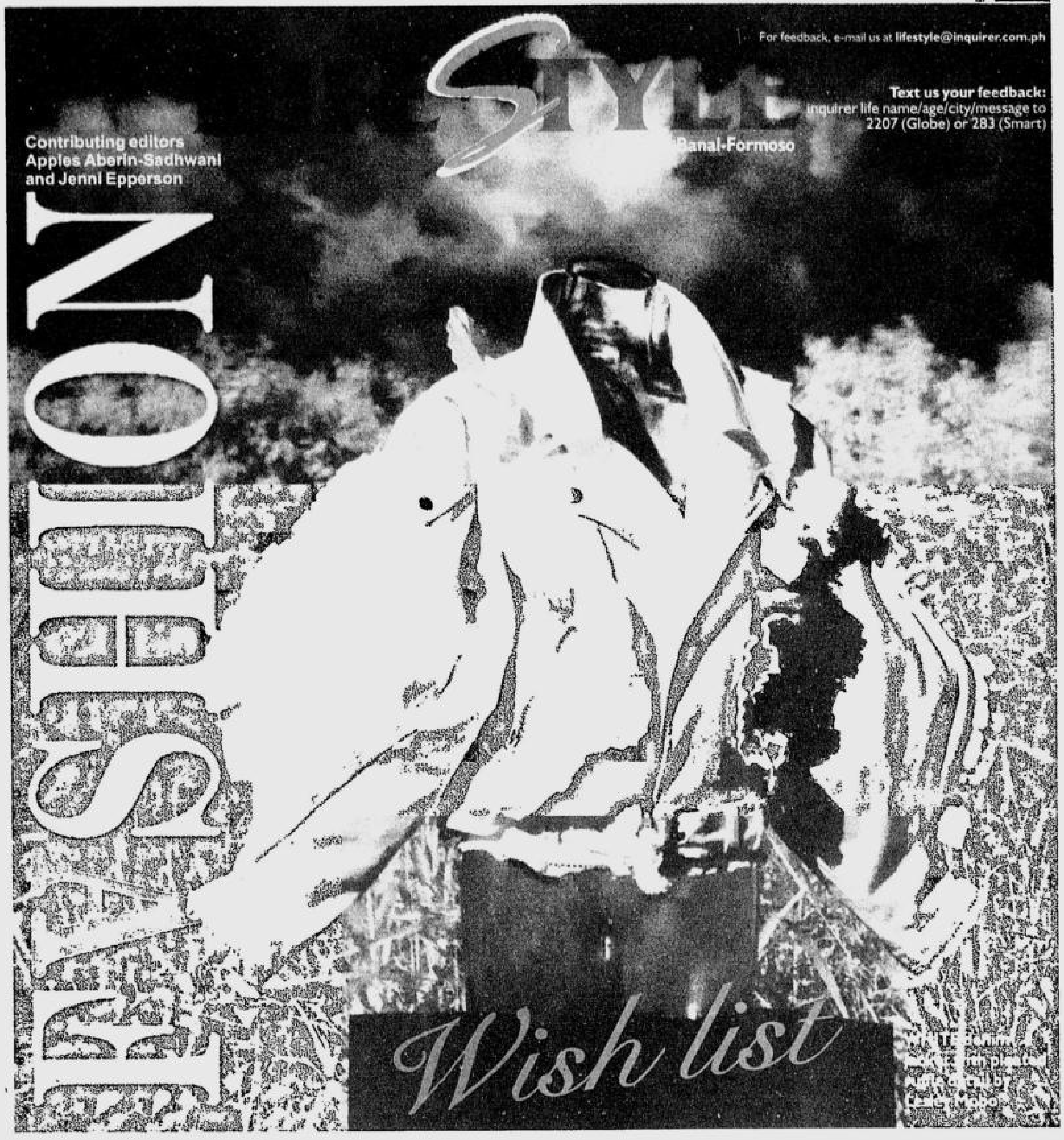

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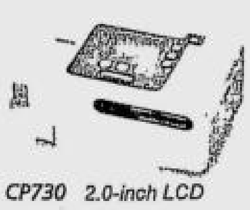

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MOTOROLA

Win a gift that's much better than a partridge in a pear tree.

"On the Fourth day of Christmas, my Moto gave to me, 4 MotoMings and a new MOTOKRZR for free."

Tune in to your favorite radio station. Listen closely to Motorola's Twelve Gifts of Christmas and follow the DJ's instructions after the song is played. If you can sing the song then correctly answer the DJ's question, you'll get to win cool Motorola gifts and a chance to win the new Motorola KRZR and RIZR phones! Better than Four calling birds and Three French hens.

Make Motorola's 12 Gifts of Christmas your ring tone and ring back. Just text in the following keywords and send to 2955.

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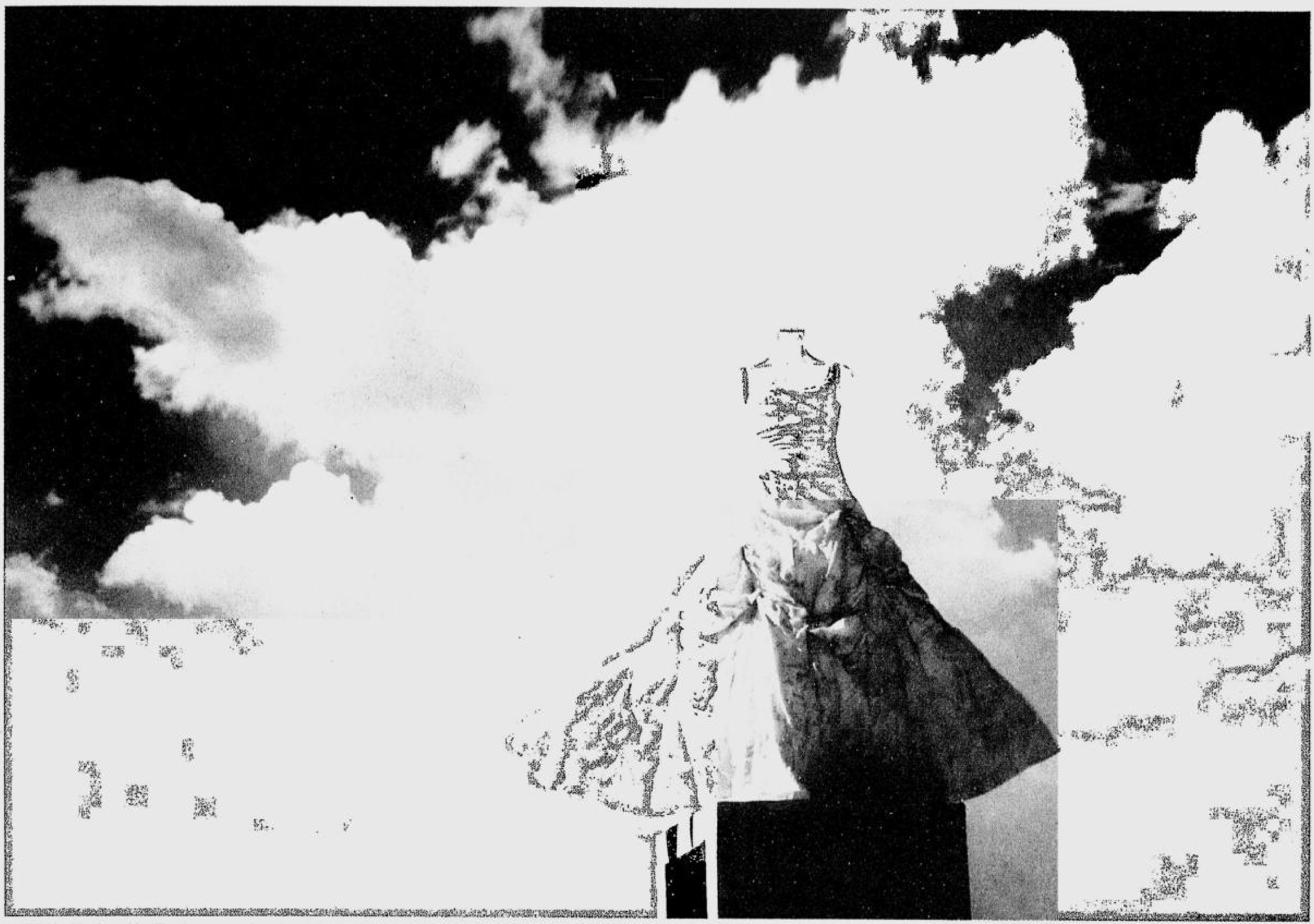
HELLOMOTO MT 12GIFTS
For Polytone text
HELLOMOTO PT 12GIFTS

For Ring back:
Globe: Text **MOTO12GIFTS** or **12GIFTS**
and send to 2332
Smart: Text **RING ADD 105670**
and send to 286

MOTOROLA 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS



GOWN by Monique Lhuillier (courtesy of madame Amparito Lhuillier and Ms Joie P. Lhuillier)

Wish list

Let these beautiful photographs and equally stunning pieces, products all of Filipino talent, speak for themselves

THIS WAS A SHOOT LIKE NO other, a fashion/design coup of sorts, because it involved a host of highly talented Filipinos who've made their mark in the ultra-competitive international arena.

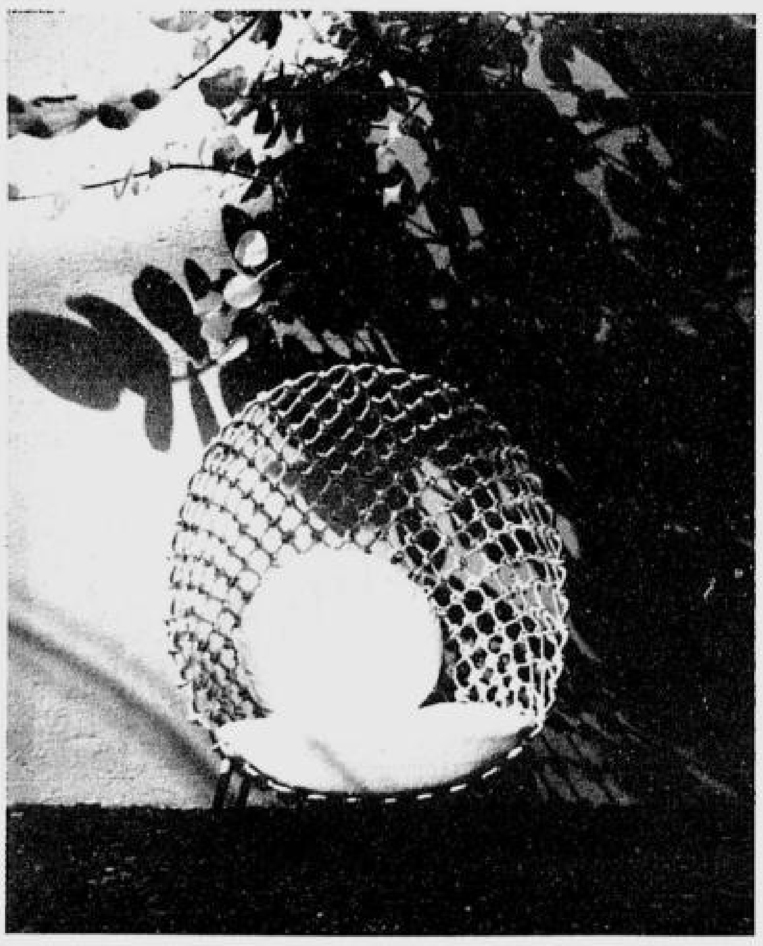
APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Stylist Millet Arzaga fervently worked to bring together a lineup of fashion movers and shakers who truly make us proud to be Pinoy.

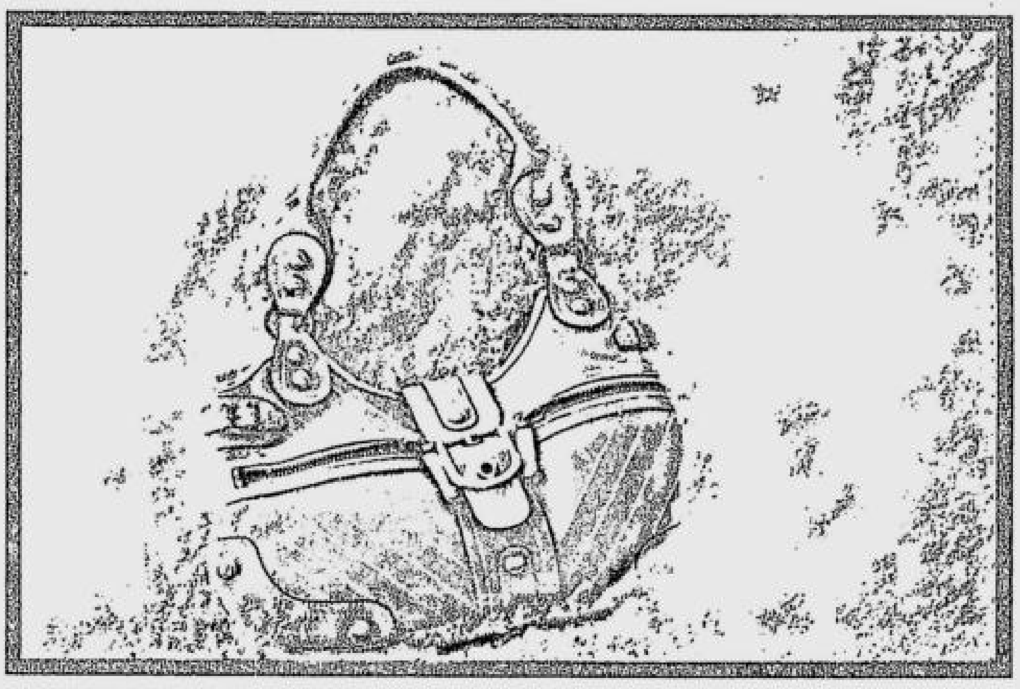
To make the editorial more visual, we've focused on the products (our very own wish list of extra-special Christmas treats) that have catapulted the chosen designers into international fame.

As such, ace lensman Jun de Leon, who never fails to push the bar a little higher, shot and treated the items (using the latest infrared technology, mind you) as the art pieces that they are. The results: extremely vivid, goosebump-inducing black-and-white stills that remind me why I am passionate about what I do.



DRAGNET chair by Kenneth Cobonpue, available at Budji Living showroom (tel. 8965346)

BEJEWELED shoe by Gaupo, available at the basement of The Peninsula Manila. Background: crystals from Swarovski



BAG BY Rafé, available at Mix Greenbelt 3

BEADED obi belt by Bea Valdez

The product lineup is composed of no less than the following: multi-awarded furniture designer Kenneth Cobonpue's Dragnet chair made of polycotton fabric twisted and wrapped around a frame of powder-coated steel with stainless-steel legs; style icon Bea Valdez's exquisite beaded sash that's available in stores like Barneys and Harvey Nichols; Harrod's' head designer Lesley Mobo's surreal, dove-like jacket, which was FedEx-ed all the way from London; former Shanghai Tang creative director and top designer Cesar Gaupo's bejeweled stiletto; one of world-renowned Rafé's must-have bags; and in-demand wedding and red-carpet designer Monique Lhuillier's romantic, ethereal gown.

I can go on and on about all these personalities' stellar achievements. I can expound on Bea's extra-fine beadwork that is both a visual and tactile treat. Or I can enumerate Kenneth and Lesley's many awards, or relate just how much Brad Pitt loves Kenneth's standout furniture pieces. I can even tell you all about Rafe's rise to fame and Cesar's long, illustrious career. But for now, allow me to keep this short and simple.

Let these beautiful photographs and equally stunning pieces speak for themselves. In this season of thanksgiving, may these inspire Pinoy pride in you and your kin.

Merry Christmas to one and all from all of us at INQUIRER Fashion!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Photography Jun De Leon
Concept/styling Millet Arzaga
Body form courtesy
of Better Than Bare Lingerie

TWEETIE dons simple and elegant black Vuarnet shades with Skylynx lenses.

LEXI prefers trendy black oversized Vuarnet shades with high-quality nylon frames.

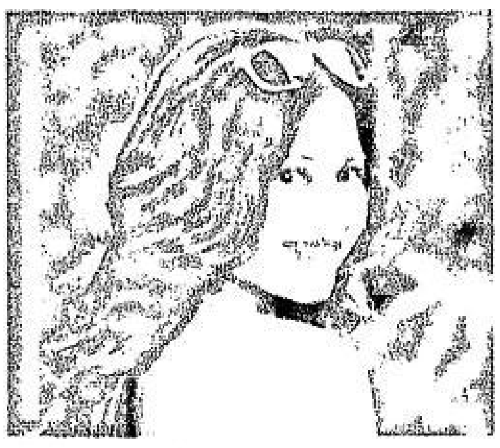
More than meets the eye

TIMELESS BEAUTIES TWEETIE DE Leon-Gonzalez, Lexi Schulze Berenguer-Testa and Alexi Alunan are more than just pretty faces dressed in fashionable frocks. What's fascinating and inspiring about these women is the accomplished lives they live.

A loving wife and a mother of five, Tweetie is a sought-after product endorser and jewelry designer with her own product line, Ice.

New mom Lexi is a multitasker host-deejay-columnist-editor-freelance-writer-actress who's back in school for her Masters in Counseling Psychology at the De La Salle University.

Meanwhile, Alexi juggles her time between polishing her Spanish skills at the Instituto Cervantes de Manila and imparting what she's learned as a Spanish instructor at the Ateneo de Manila University. On top of these, she's also taking up her Masters in Education at the Ateneo and has her hands full tutoring kids on the side.



ALEXI wears a funky red pair of Vuarnet women's acetate and nylon sunglasses.

Like these three accomplished women, Vuarnet sunglasses are more than just stylish sunglasses, as each pair excellently combines form and function. In fact, professional athletes in the Los Angeles Olympic Games of 1984 proved that Vuarnet sunglasses can hold their own even in the most challenging sporting conditions.

Although not pro athletes, Tweetie, Lexi and Alexi also believe in the importance of quality in their choice of eyewear, and Vuarnet Sunglasses definitely conform to their standards.

High-performance Vuarnet sunglasses are coated using Schott Spezialglas AG and Standort Grunenplan technology. They are then mounted in sturdy, corrosion-resistant acetate, metal and nylon frames.

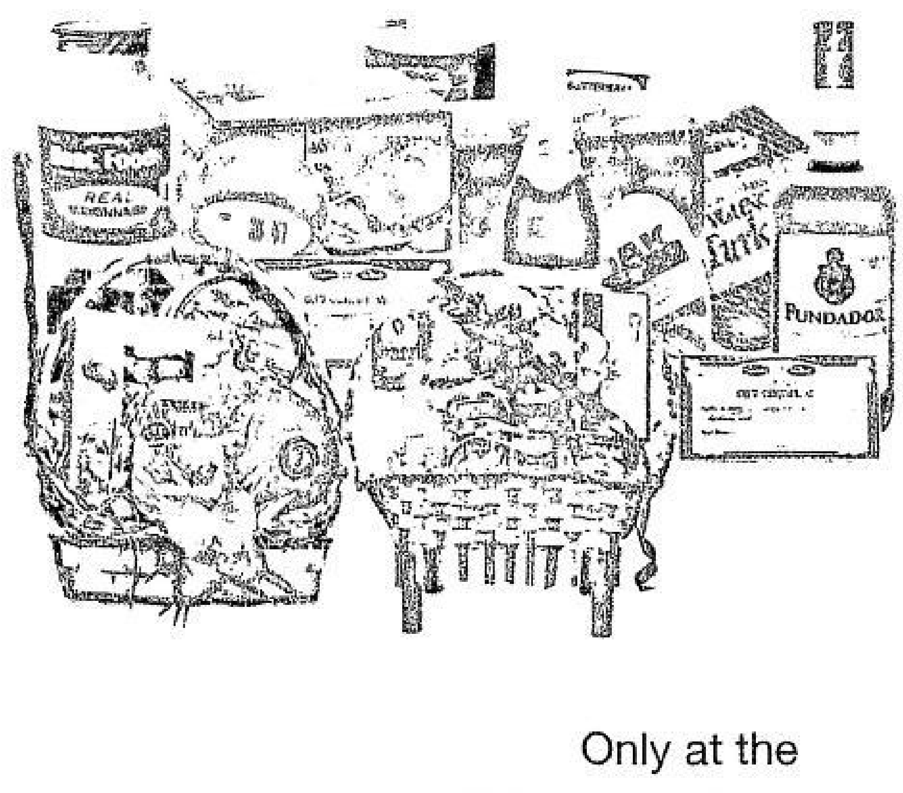
The mineral glasses provide excellent protection against the sun, have higher scratch resistance than plastic, and have outstanding optical qualities.

Furthermore, eight different glass varieties in green, brown, yellow, and yellow-green colors, among them the Skylynx and Unilynx, are able to meet the most extreme quality standards of transparency and protection.

Vuarnet's high technology and unique styles allow Tweetie, Lexi and Alexi to depend on the brand's durability and class. *AAS*

VUARNET IS AVAILABLE IN SABATER OPTICAL AT POWER PLANT MALL, SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL AND AMANPULO RESORT, AND IN SARABIA OPTICAL AT GREENBELT 1, GLORIETTA, ALABANG TOWN CENTER, FESTIVAL MALL, AND WILL SOON BE AVAILABLE AT RUSTAN'S DEPARTMENT STORES.

The wise man in you knows what's best to share this Christmas.



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MOTOROLA

Win a gift that's much better than a partridge in a pear tree.

"On the Fifth day of Christmas, my Moto gave to me, 5 Golden RAZRs and a new MOTOKRZR for free."

Tune in to your favorite radio station. Listen closely to Motorola's Twelve Gifts of Christmas and follow the DJ's instructions after the song is played. If you can sing the song then correctly answer the DJ's question, you'll get to win cool Motorola gifts and a chance to win the new Motorola KRZR and RIZR phones! Better than Five golden rings and Four calling birds.

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and send to 2332
Smart: Text RING ADD 105670
and send to 286.

MOTOROLA 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

Filipino Artus Concepcion is at the helm of the very successful Headquarters PR in New York City

PR man to the fashion stars

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

MANY PEOPLE THINK of the PR world to be all about glitz, glam, and endless schmoozing at cocktail parties among society's namedroppables. Well, yes it is, but that's only one aspect of it. There is a whole other side to this cutthroat business that involves a lot of hard work, strategic planning and creative thinking for valued clientele.

Meet Artus Concepcion, a Filipino at the helm of the very successful Headquarters PR in New York City. It all stemmed from a passion for fashion (I can relate to that), which led him to the ins and outs of working for such high-end clientele as Calvin Klein and Vivienne Tam.

This seasoned PR man's resume reads like a red-carpet invite list: He's done publicity work for the likes of Anna Sui, Isaac Mizrahi, Betsey Johnson, Calvin Klein and Jimmy Choo.

He likewise led PR work for London-based brands Ben Sherman and Evisu Sportswear, and directed activities for hip-hop brand Marc Ecko.

Along with his partner Karina Sokolovsky, who has done global publicity for eight years at J Crew, he heads Headquarters PR, whose services run the gamut of professional PR services, from public relations strategy development to day-to-day press relations, special events, celebrity wardrobing, product launches and philanthropy programs.

Step into his office and find out a few tricks of the trade of fashion PR in one of the world's fashion capitals.

What kind of publicity work do you do?

I do fashion PR. We do mostly fashion-oriented planning. The clients that we have are Vivienne Tam, Catherine Maladrino, Mexx. We have a few European brands, like Evisu. We also do shows for Oakley and Calvin Klein, which is currently a consulting client of ours.

Are you only US-based?

Our work is mostly centered in New York, but we're trying to open a satellite office in London, too. There are a lot of hot new designers there, and so we want to offer our PR and representation services if they need it in New York as well. We're a small PR agency, and we want to keep it that way. We have about 14 clients that we deal with directly.

What is your background? What led you to PR?

I grew up in Pampanga, and then I went to college in UP and in San Francisco. After college I moved to Los Angeles. So I used to work for an AIDS foundation there. And then in 1991, there was an event for Calvin Klein, which was for an AIDS foundation, and Kate Moss attended this. She was really hot and she was the poster girl for Calvin Klein. Then I met the people from New York who produced the show, so I freelanced for them in 1993 and I moved to New York to work for KCD. They had Marc Jacobs, Versace, Chloe, and Anna Sui. So pretty much I started doing PR in '91-'92. I have always loved fashion, so I was led naturally into it. It wasn't really my major in college, so I just fell into doing what I really love. I've worked for different agencies, I've worked in-house for Mark Ecko, and I did PR for Old Navy as well, and then started my own agency two and a half years ago.

This is really my baby; it's so much better to work for you!

How did you get your roster of high-end clients?

We didn't really advertise our agency to get our clients, it was mostly through networking. Most of the fashion editors recommended the hot new designers to us. We always work with all of the fashion magazine editors, from Vogue to Bazaar, even men's magazines like GQ. We also work with international magazines, like ID in the UK, Dazed and Confused, Italian Vogue and British Vogue. Since we also do store events, the bulk of the work is actually the calling of editors, insider TV, fashion segments on TV, celebrity channels, celebrity magazines like People or Us Weekly.

Which fashion channels do you work with?

For fashion week, we work for a lot like Fashion File, CNN, Video Fashion, and Global Fashion News. There are so many, we even work with Hong Kong and Canadian channels. We work with Fashion Television, too.

Only because it's popular here in Manila, have you worked with "Project Runway" at all?

I know Nina Garcia really well! I know it's a very popular show and we're on the third season. Next season, we're going to try to put Vivienne Tam as one of the judges, to promote our designers. She's very well-established; even Catherine Maladrino was in this last season. It's hard, now that the show is so popular! Before, they were really asking for people to become a judge, now people are lining up.

Good for Michael Kors then? Anyway, what did you have to work at to become a successful publicist?

I used to do backstage fashion production, they call it back of house. That's when you cast the models, take pictures; you do the run-up show. I ended up doing the other side of fashion production, and got to know most of the fashion editors who eventually became my friends.

Which part of publicity work do you enjoy the most?

I think it's mostly the networking. Or just promoting the clothing of clients that you really believe in. We don't just take clients just because they pay. If I can't promote it, why take advantage of the monthly retainer? We also don't try to take clients that are conflicting or competing. For example, if I have a client specializing in men's suits, I won't take another client in the same line. What I enjoy the most? The events, the talking and networking. Now I go to only the important ones, like the Cosmititude Ball, or the CMV parties. But my job is to publicize my clients, not myself. I've done the party circuits, I've done the social events, I've been there done that, and I've been to every show. I hobnob all the time; I see Calvin Klein all the time, he lives in my neighborhood, I just wave at him. I did Isaac Mizrahi's show once.

Name five interesting people you can say you're really connected with.

Basically, everyone is really interesting, whether they're socialites or not! Most of the time I produce or promote [the celebrities]. So I know them not just because I attend the events. Even my girls are very professional. You have to make sure they're fine and escort them to their seats during the fashion shows.

Is it all as glamorous as you see it on TV?

Yes and no... my job is really to get the photographers to, say, run over to Sharon Stone if she walks into an event. Celebrities are usually very discrete when they come in the shows during fashion week. They try not to. But let me tell you a secret—for fashion shows, if you need a celebrity, you need to hire a celebrity wrangler. You give them a budget, and they would give you at least two good celebrities. Maybe you'd end up with, say, Lindsay Lohan or Mischa Barton, and maybe a few B-stars. If the designer has a budget for it, then we would hire them.

So how about shows like Marc Jacobs?

Of course, there are designers who have A-list friends. J Lo did his last campaign, so she was there, along with Uma Thurman. Many designers pay for celebrities to attend, it's part of it. Versace pays for them, Armani flies them over. It's a big industry, but once you've got celebrity endorsement, your name gets branded.

What's your typical day like?

E-mails, phone calls to clients, fashion editors... press previews are coming up with Spring 2007, so we have to prepare for that. We invite editors of both men's and women's magazines and they come at a certain time, we give them a slot and we preview them. We represent these collections; right now it's for Spring 2007, they're not in the stores yet. We're working for Rosasen, Mata Piri which is a ski brand, Mexx, owned by Liz Claiborne. We have a few downtown designers like Unis, she's Korean Eunice Lee. She used to design for DKNY and she's a darling of the editors. It's really a variety of designers that we believe in. For celebrities, I did J Lo's show once and she's doing really well. We did Lam by Gwen Stefani. I've done it all (laughs).

So would you say you're a bit jaded?

No, not at all! I love what I do! I just don't get overwhelmed anymore. We just did an event last night, with Global Dream, the Al Gore foundation that he represents. Leonardo DiCaprio, Brad Pitt, Ed Norton Jr. are big supporters of it because they're very environmentally conscious. We produced that event so we invited fashion editors.

You don't get star-struck anymore?

Oh we [still] read all those [gossip web] sites, like Perezhilton.com the blogger (laughs)—they make fun of everyone! But celebrities are usually very nice; I haven't really handled someone who wasn't nice. Like Paris Hilton is very nice. But I'm not a celebrity stalker, I'm over that! There are some publicists that are... they actually go up to celebs and offer them free clothes and all. But I don't do that, that's not our style!

Advice you can give to aspiring businesses?

It's a lot of hard work. A lot of people think it's just all glamour and fun, but you have to be very organized, and be very nice. For a startup, you just need to get out there and network! It's also about moving your company, talking about your company, and being street smart. It's also about hard work and not burn bridges. Publicize your clients. Publicize your company, not yourself.

Why is it not advisable to promote yourself?

Again, promote your company, not yourself! I'm sure you've heard a lot about these publicists who do that, but the really good, professional ones don't do that.

What difficulties do you face?

If you can't get enough fashion credits for your client. Even if you have good relationships with editors, it means that the season is not that "strong." It's a big issue with clients if you don't come out in the big magazines like Cosmo or Marie Claire. Sometimes, even if the clothes were shot, the editorial gets scrapped, and we just have to tell our clients in a nice way.

What is the future of your company?

Exciting developments are moving on to representing restaurants, furniture lines, and airlines. It's about diversifying into more corporate clients. In the long run, we hope to have a junior partner whom we can trust and we can do more of overseeing the business. We still want to retain our boutique size because we deal with our clients directly, not like the big PR companies who usually assign junior publicists to handle them.

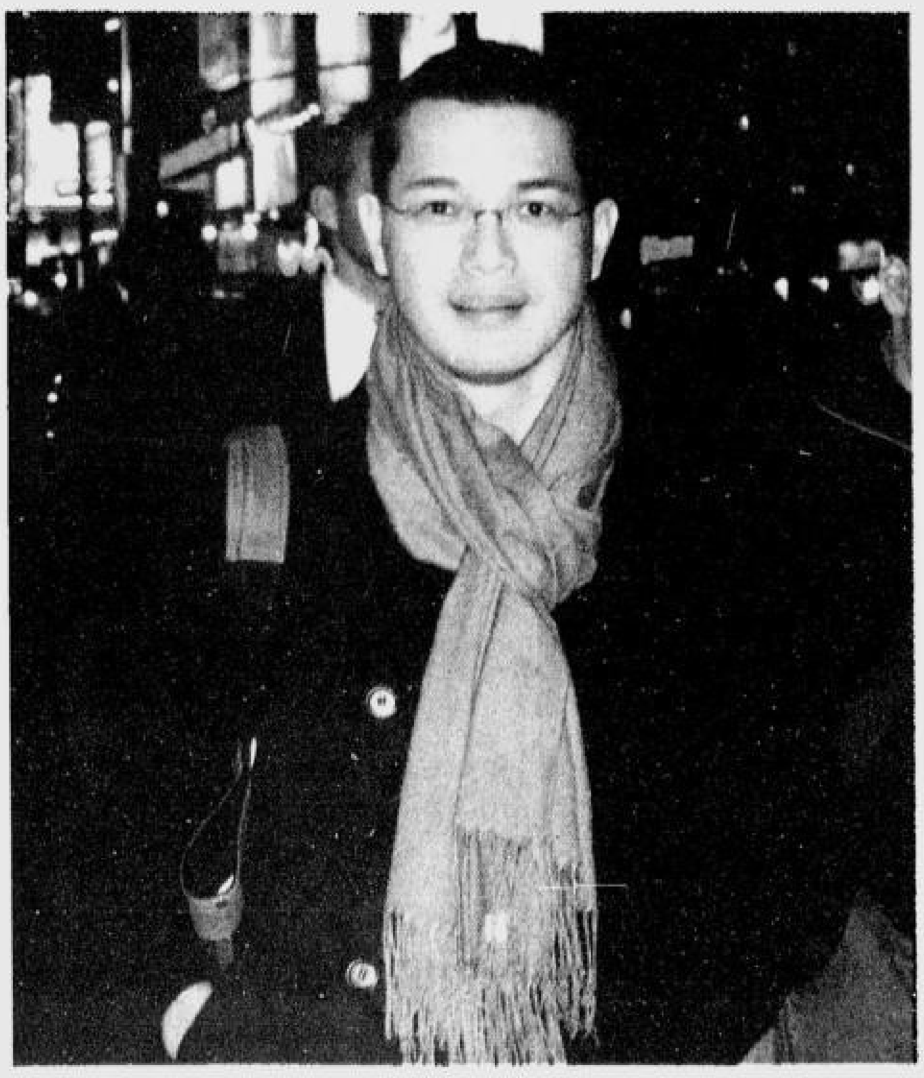
I think Pinoys can be good at PR because we're known to be charming and yet not afraid to get our hands dirty.

Yes! Oh I've paid my dues these past 16 years! I was an intern, used to fetch coffee, make photocopies, I was ready to give up at one point, but because I just love what I do so I stayed on. And you'll be surprised how many Pinoys are in the fashion world!

Parting words for all the global Pinoys?

If you don't invest in anything, there's no return! If any Filipino wants to get into fashion, if they're hungry for it and it's in their blood, then work—it's about hard work and network!

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph



The marry-est month

Add glitter to the glittering month of December

DECEMBER, RATHER THAN JUNE, is the month when the most number of brides walk down the aisle to say "I do." The June bride actually originated from the old days in the West when folks would get married right after spring and their yearly bath! But nowadays, statistics will show that December is the marry-est month.

THE GLAMOUR and opulence of the Victorian era is brought back to life through this vintage-inspired collar, bracelet and earrings set, P25,200. Gown by Ferdie Abuel.

THESE streamlined and sophisticated rings and earrings are chic accents for the modern bride [illegible]

Being caught up in all the wedding and holiday frenzy can surely be stressful for any bride-to-be (and everyone involved in the preparations, for that matter). And given that all brides want to look their best on their wedding day, one way to stand out and look stunning is by choosing the right jewelry to match the perfect wedding gown. Brides can sparkle and shine brighter with the right pieces to match their inner glow.

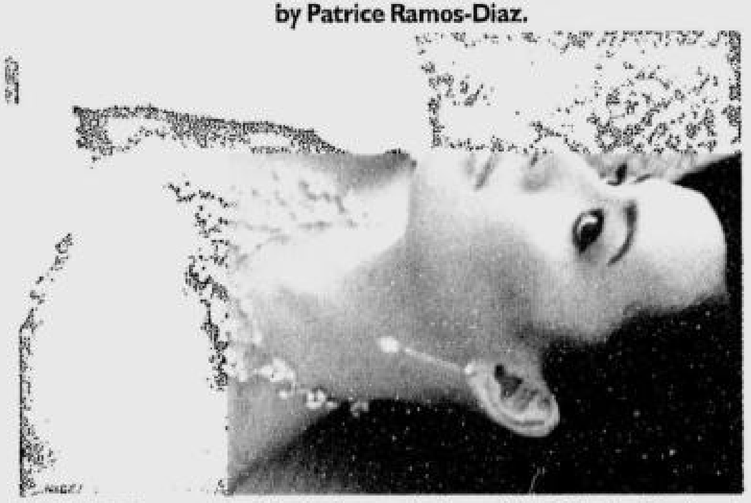
This is precisely why Silverworks, the country's leading retailer for sterling silver fashion accessories, has introduced a vast array of jewelry pieces that can set off any outfit. These standout pieces are perfect for the bride, her entourage and others joining the celebration.

Silverworks' jewelry pieces range from intricately designed chokers to more contemporary multi-tiered necklaces with pearls and precious stones, so there's something available for everyone.

Romina Zamora, a December bride herself, radiates glamour and elegance and shows all and sundry how to sparkle and shine during the marry-est month and one's wedding day. *AAS*

Photography Pat Dy
Styling Maureen Disini
Model Romina Zamora
Makeup Gela Laurel/Lancome
Hair Chris Cadagat/Basecut Salon Libis
Jewelry Silverworks

THE CHARM of petite flowers is irresistible in this necklace and bracelet set with matching earrings, P6,200. Gown by Patrice Ramos-Diaz.



INSPIRED by nature, this intricate choker with subtle leaf designs is perfect for garden weddings. Choker, P6,950; drop earrings, P790. Gown by Eric de los Santos.

Lounging in style
On Kim: Laundry chocolate silk top and brown shorts with thin belt, Liz Claiborne gold necklace; on Alex: Jessica cream silk chiffon top, Liz Claiborne silk chiffon leopard-print skirt; on Aaron: MEXX navy collared shirt and gray knit shirt, CK Jeans denim pants; on Mona: MEXX black and white knit wrap top, Laundry black slim fit pants; on Daryl: MEXX brown long sleeves with red stripes and chocolate brown pants

Holiday sparkle

STORES SPECIALISTS INC., the exclusive distributor of some of the best, fashion-forward names in international fashion, offers stylish options to help us shine during the holidays.

Check out Anne Klein's bronze silk satin halter dress with beads, which you can amp up with Liz Claiborne's patent maroon bag with a shiny gold chain strap. Or why not go for a Christmas red jersey dress from Laundry?

Basic nude or requisite black are excellent options, too. Just remember to choose statement pieces with head-turning details like Jessica's silk chiffon Victorian top with flower appliqués or Label's ladylike knee-length skirt trimmed with ruffles. You can't go wrong with a black lace top. Laundry has one that is particularly sexy and which can be easily paired with a tulip skirt from CK.

You can also go for splashes of vibrant color! Opt for a printed chiffon empire-cut dress with a red ribbon on the waist. Or be the toast of the party in a flapper-inspired colorful chiffon empire piece from Laundry.

For more casual get-togethers, a CK Jeans miniskirt can be matched with a fully sequined silver spaghetti-strap top (especially when you have a rabbit fur scarf tied around your neck!). A very casual Mexx navy polo shirt underneath an A/X black velvet suit jacket is a great study in contrasts, too.

And for your man, a slim black tie with his A/X slim black long-sleeve shirt provides a touch of evening glamour to his washed denim pants. For dressier events, a suit—especially one with a subtle sheen, like the black velvet A/X jacket—is the perfect option.

With the right attitude, not to mention the right outfit, you can easily hop from one fete to another, assured that everyone's noticed and everyone's glad that you have arrived—and how! *AAS*

Photography Jo Ann Bitagcol
Styling Charmaine Palermo
Makeup Robbie Pinera • Hair Felicity Son
Clothes and accessories
A/X, Anne Klein, CK, CK Jeans, Jessica, Laundry, Liz Claiborne, Mexx,
Models Kim, Mona and Daryl / Look Models, Aaron / Men's Division Talents & Model Management and Alex / Ahensiya Modelo
Shot on location at Fiamma
Wines Gran Trillo

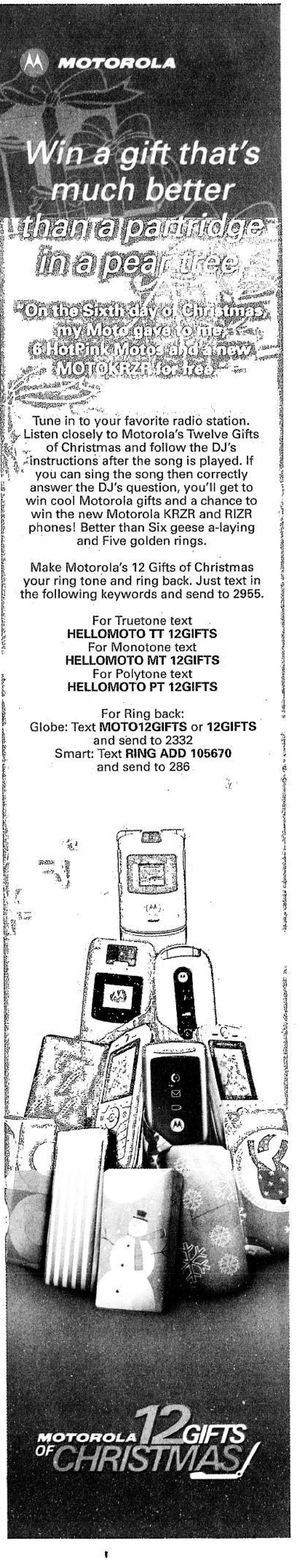
Sweetest Goodbye
On Mona: Anne Klein bronze silk satin halter dress, Liz Claiborne maroon bag with gold chain strap, gold belt worn as choker and gold necklace with tassel pendant; on Daryl: A/X black velvet suit jacket, MEXX navy polo shirt, CK army green shirt

Innocent Flirtations
On Aaron: A/X ribbed black shirt, gray denim pants and gray knit scarf; on Alex: Laundry red jersey halter dress, Liz Claiborne red and gold necklace and gold bangles (set of 3)

Dancing the night away

On Kim: CK black rabbit fur and sequined silver top, CK Jeans denim miniskirt, Anne Klein silver charm necklace and black chandelier earrings, A/X black knit coat; on Aaron: CK white shirt, CK Jeans green jacket and denim pants; on Daryl: A/X black bonnet, denim pants and gray knit shirt, CK orange shirt with buttons; on Alex: Jessica blue-green silk top with lace details, CK Jeans denim pants with crystal studs, Anne Klein gold and black bangle, Liz Claiborne navy and silver drop earrings and necklace

The Glitz Club
(Counter clockwise) on Daryl: A/X black velvet suit jacket, white long sleeves with black stripes, red necktie, black belt and denim pants; on Aaron: A/X black suit jacket, white long sleeves, black pants and black belt; on Mona: Laundry printed chiffon empire dress with red ribbon, Jessica black necklace; on Kim: Laundry black silk chiffon dress, CK ribbon necklace with crystal stones, Anne Klein black and silver bracelet watch; on Alex: Jessica cream silk dress, Anne Klein chocolate brown knee socks



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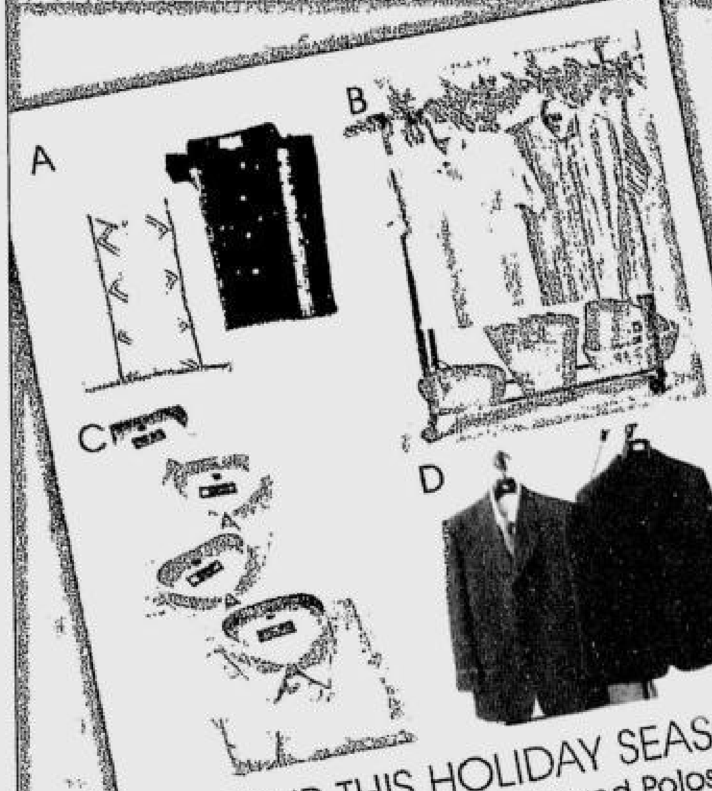
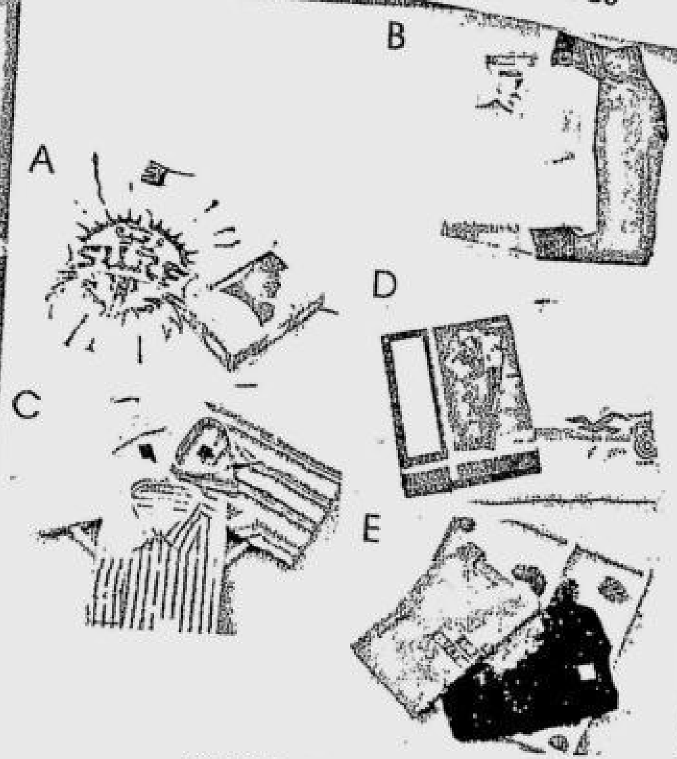


DRESS UP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

A Obra ni Juan Short Sleeved Polos
B Van Heusen Dress Shirts
C Chancellor Polos
D Wallstreet and Kingsmen Suit Jackets

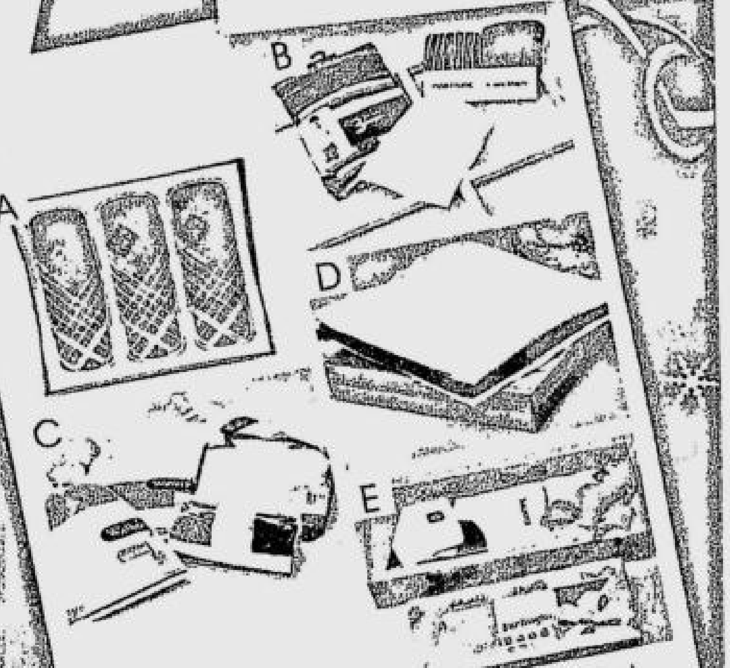
A Converse Chuck Taylors • *B* Merrell Outdoor Shoes
C Skechers Leather Casual Shoes
D Michael Gregory Dress Leather Shoes
E Rusty Lopez Leather Dress Shoes
E Mario D 'boro Leather Shoes

Freego T-Shirt

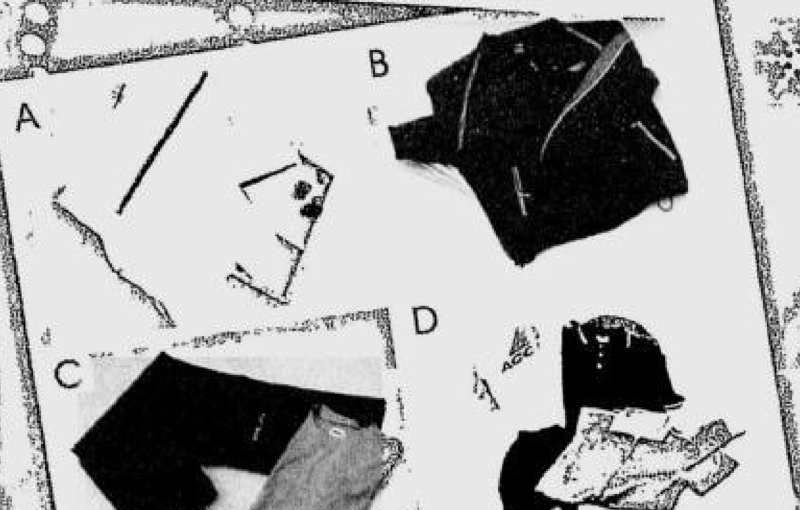


GIFTS FOR HIM

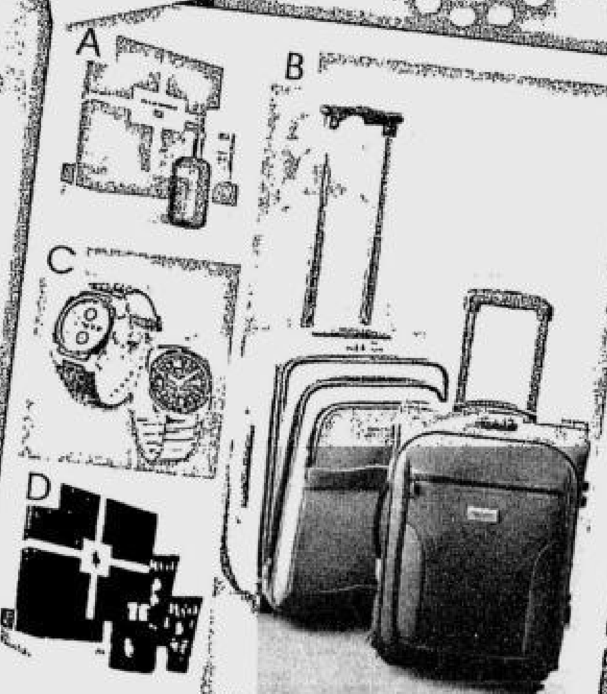
A RRJ Gift Pack
B Co. B Short Sleeved Polo and Jeans
C Arrow Polo Shirts • *D* Freego Gift Pack
E Loaded Graphic Shirts



A A. Caruso 3in1 Handkerchief Set
B Portside Underwear
C Walker Christmas Gift Buy
D Hanford Gift Packs
E Burlington Gift Packs



A Portside Jacket • *B* Sportlink Jacket
C Fila Shirt and Jogging Pants
D Accel Sports Shirts



A Polo Sport Gift Set
B Mandarin Luggage
C Tommy Hilfiger Watches
D Polo Black Gift Set

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
sm essage to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart)
at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Angelina Jolie opens up for the first time

Answers all questions on Brad, raising and adopting kids

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

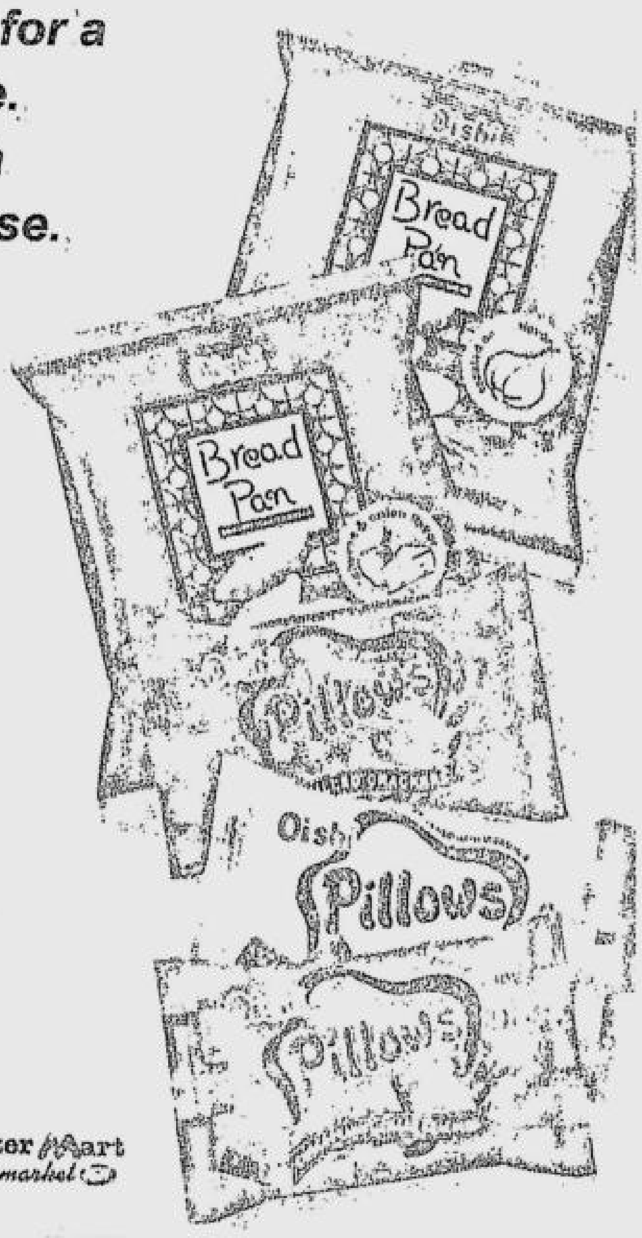
Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—"NO COMment" or "I will not answer that" never flowed from the famous bee-stung lips.

In our first press conference with **Angelina Jolie** since the media maelstrom stirred by her relationship with **Brad Pitt**, we kept expecting her to say "Sorry, that's too personal," but the actress answered all questions. She was very straightforward—no hesitation whatsoever.

Our guess is that once Angelina decided to be interviewed again after almost two years, she girded herself to face the queries and reply to them candidly and spontaneously. She was unflappable in this exchange held at a

ANGELINA/ G2



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A GOOD YEAR 5.00 7:30 10:00

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3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

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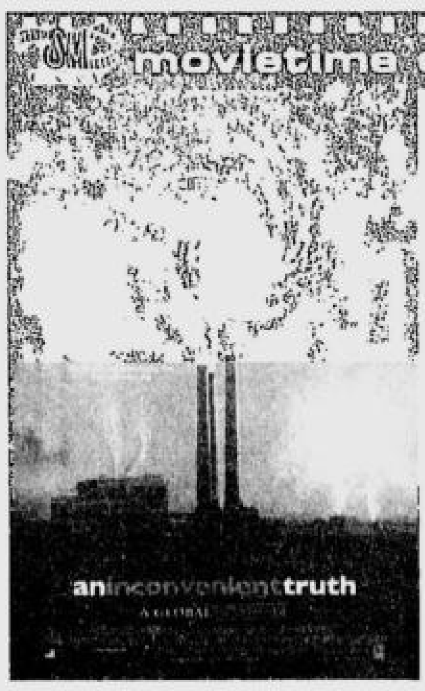

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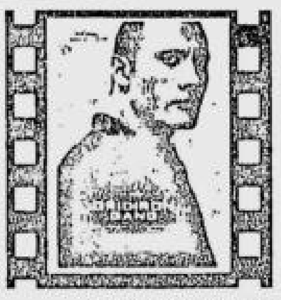

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G

Angelina J

From page G1

Park Avenue hotel, even wher appeared by the window of th The guys proceeded to train th even though there was a sh the window. Angelina simpl turned her face away from th sponding to questions.

Hotel guards were eventuall were able to bring down a sh blocked the view of the papa time we experienced such a co particular hotel room. New Yor usually don't notice ongoing pres but, occasionally, a passerby w glance at the room and see a sta reporters. That person usually smile invariably accompanies celebrity) and gawk for a few se on. Or a pedestrian would do a then take a few steps backwar then walk away.

But Angelina is such h days—hence, the sudden intrusi photographers. We're glad though heavy media scrutiny since she Brad, she is—now that she has b the press again—still as frank and as ever. We love her candor. What since we first interviewed Ange generic quality. There is somethin her—a hint of daring, danger, a p lurking beneath that gorgeous ext

Most beautiful

People often ask me who is th actress I have interviewed. I alw gelina Jolie. With her beauty, in passion for the downtrodden an especially children, and that gut her, who can blame Brad for fal her?

We hope, though, that Angel more weight. At this press con, gaunt. But the fire in her eyes a lips were still very much in evide

The film that made her come press again is "The Good Sheph directorial job of the great actor (whom Angelina and people c Bob). **Matt Damon** stars as a Yale a member of the secret Skulls an (US President **George W. Bush** a dent **George Bush**, both Yale al bers) and becomes a pivotal cha ation of the Central Intelligence A

Angelina, blonde in this film wife of Matt Damon's intelligenc in her marriage to a man who sworn to secrecy. She and Matt age from young college stu dents to parents in this drama set in the 1930s and 1940s.

Richard Holbrooke, who Filipinos remember as the US Assistant Secretary of State fo East Asia and Pacific Aff during the People Power Re lution in the Philippines, quoted in the film's product notes as saying, "'The G Shepherd' is a fictionalized sion of history which is accur in almost every incident."

Robert De Niro himself pears in the movie, along wi supporting cast that inclu **Alec Baldwin, William H Timothy Hutton, B Crudup, Michael Gamb Joe Pesci and John Turturr**

Fulfilling period

When a colleague prefaced his question by tea Angelina with, "We haven't s you in a couple of years. thing been going on?" she jo back, "Nothing at all." Of cou the whole world knows that last two years have been tur tuous, but fulfilling, perio Angelina's life: She and adopted an Ethiopian b named **Zahara Marley Jolie-Pitt** and she gave birth to **Shiloh Nouvel Jolie-Pitt** (father Brad). **Jennifer Aniston's** husband has also legally ad ed Cambodian Maddox, fo called by Angelina as "Mad" whom she first adopted in 20

It is said that one of the q ties that attracted Brad to gelina is her passion to incr awareness of and aid for c tries torn by conflicts, dis and other problems. This d cation to help the less fortun reportedly inculcated in he her mother, French act **Marcheline Bertrand** (wh battling cancer), led to An na's appointment as the G will Ambassador for the Un Nations High Commissioner Refugees.

The UN volunteer work her film projects (she recently shot a movie on slain journa Daniel Pearl in India) make An gelina travel often as it is on her own, she also likes to her small plane. She has earned both US and UK pilot licenses (the latter one was harder to get, she told us).

At the press con, Angelina, wearing a taupe silk dress, often clasped her hands (we're always struck by her long, slim fingers), put her arms on the table and leaned forward as she

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olie opens up for the first time

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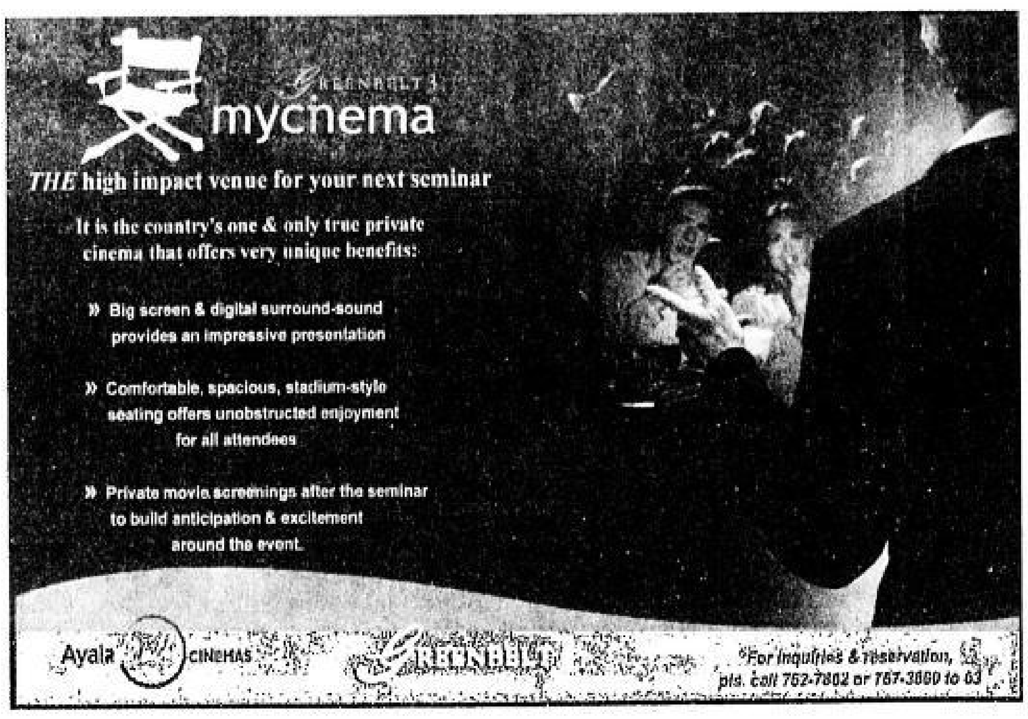
fielded questions.

We haven't talked to you in almost two years. Can you recap the high points in your personal journey in the last couple of years?

The high points are the obvious. My coming together with Brad; Brad and Maddox coming together; and Zahara coming into our family. The low or scarier point was when Zahara got sick. Her surviving that was a high point. My having a baby (Shiloh) and now her personality is coming out—it's fun. It's great to see all three kids together.

On a professional level, this film was wonderful to work on. That I'll be working a lot less and spending a lot more time at home was a welcome decision at the end of the day.

ANGELINA/ G4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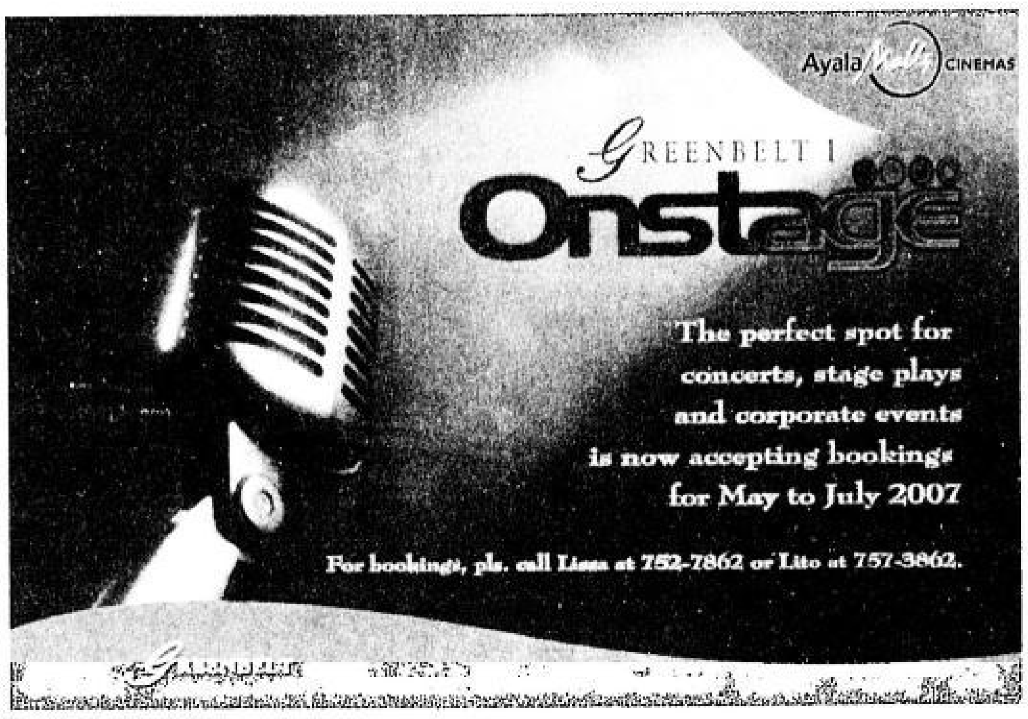
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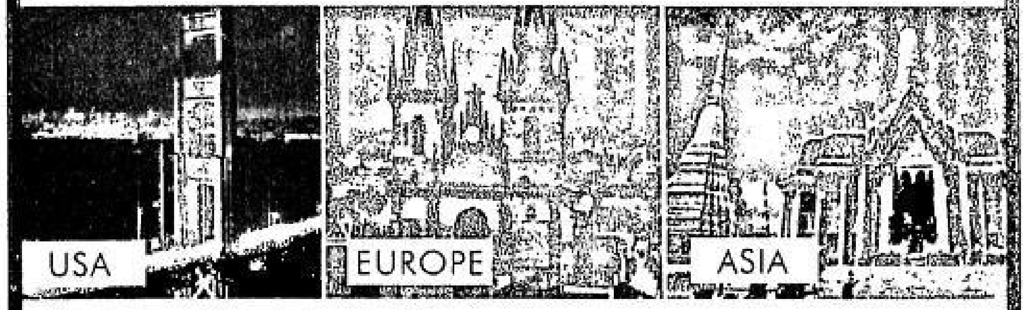

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WWE ARMAGEDDON Pay per View 7:00	CASINO ROYALE 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	INANG YAYA 12:30 / 2:40 / 7:10	ALL THE KING'S MEN 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

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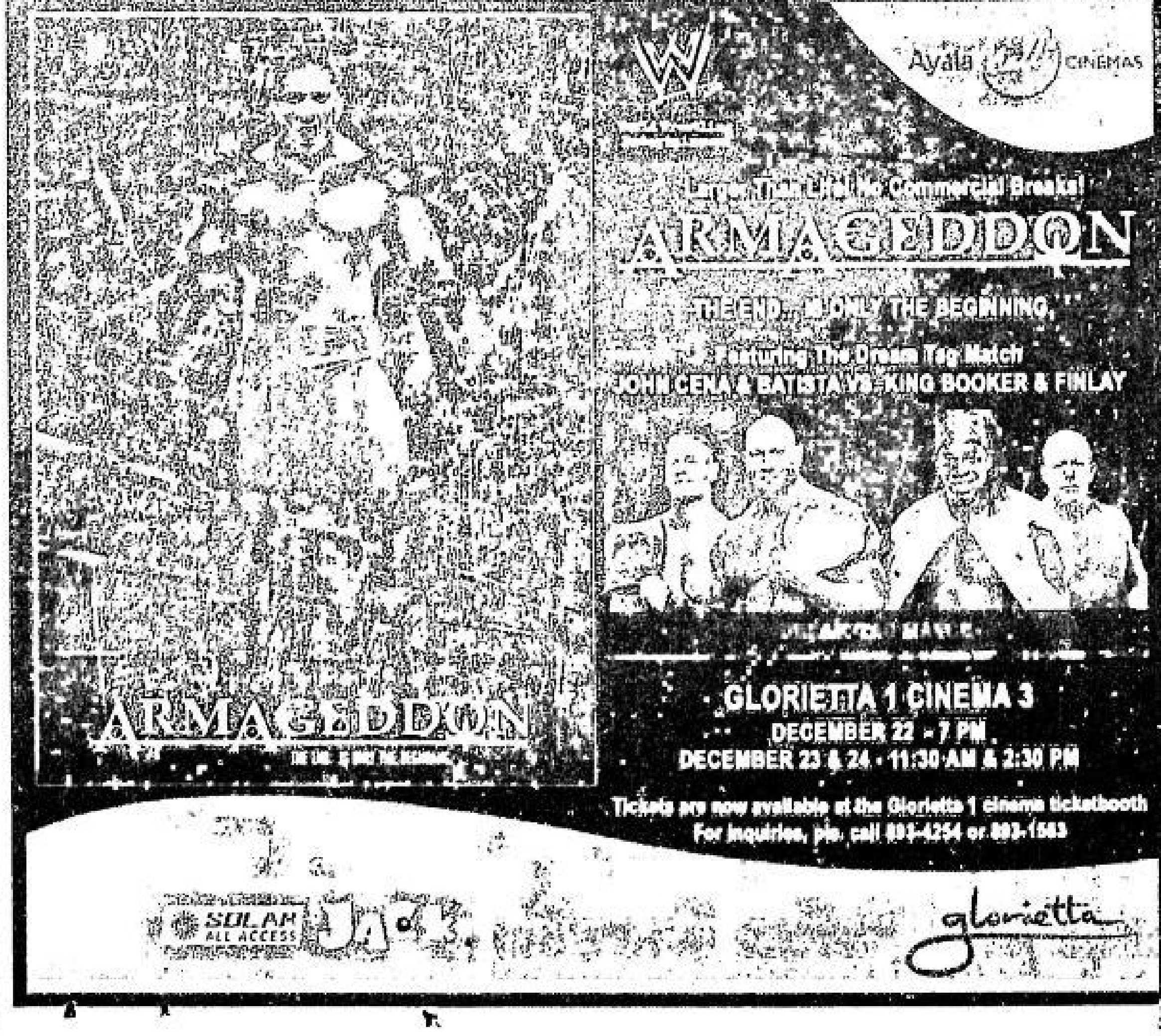
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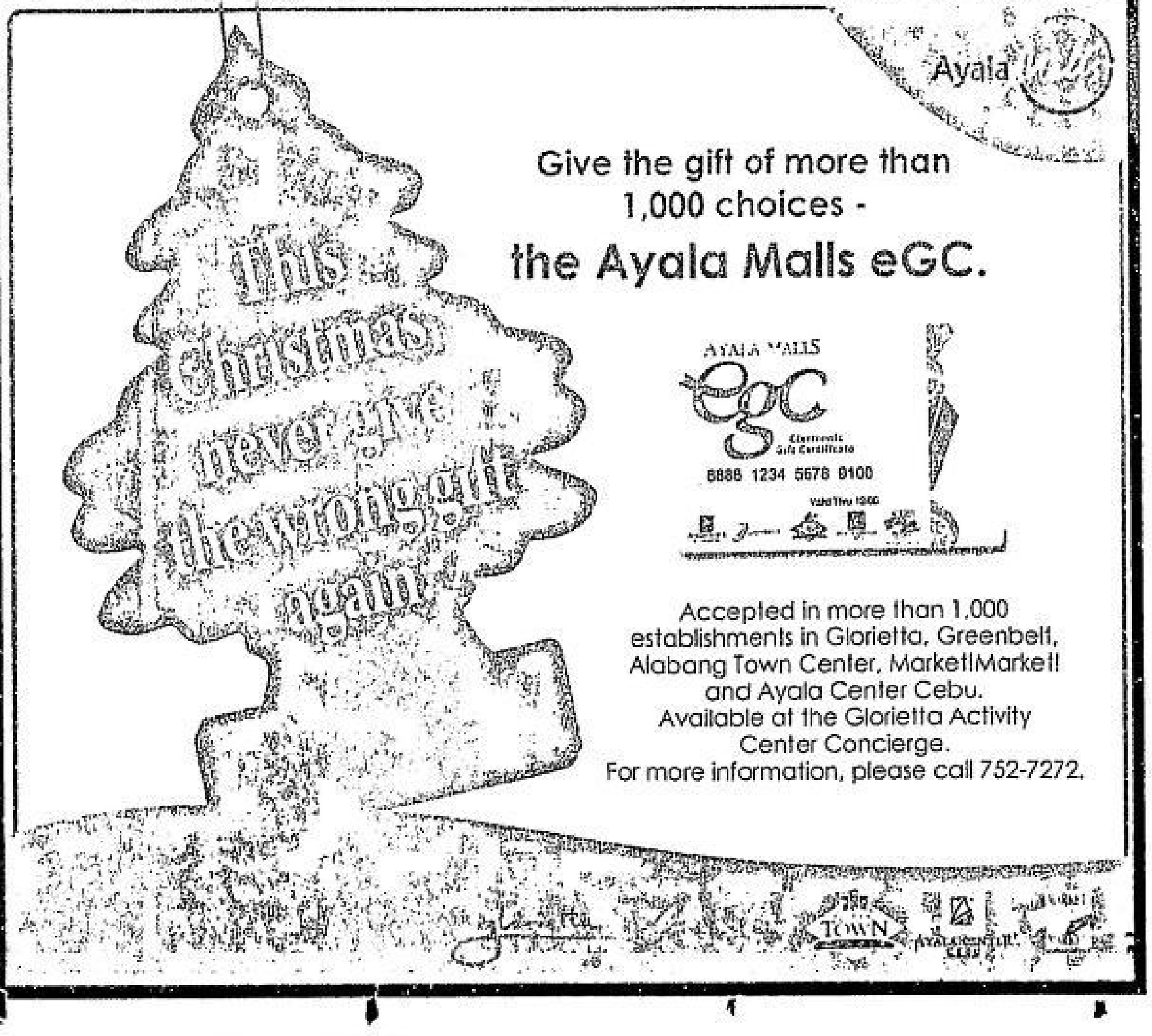
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Angelina Jolie opens up for the first time

From page G2

And you have been going on these missions for the UN.

I've been working for the UN for five years now. I have been involved with projects in Cambodia for four years. I'm still pushing for different bills in Washington and they haven't gone through. We have a new Congress. Maybe they will (pass those bills).

I'm trying to educate myself more to be able to handle discussions on issues better and not just be emotional about them. I would try to actually deal with them on a stronger level and make some changes.

As I'm looking at you from the side, you and Brad could be brother and sister.

Well, thank God we're not (laughter).

Even in your voice and the way you respond to questions.

Oh, no. Really?

Do you think your relationship is based on the fact that you are alike?

You know, it's funny. When we first came together, everybody commented on how different we were. So now it's funny to hear somebody comment on how similar we are. Oh my God, I think you've scared me into thinking we're starting to be that couple that morphs (starts looking like each other). We are very different in many ways—certainly in the way he is at home and the way I am at home. But we balance each other quite well.

Can you give an example of how different you are?

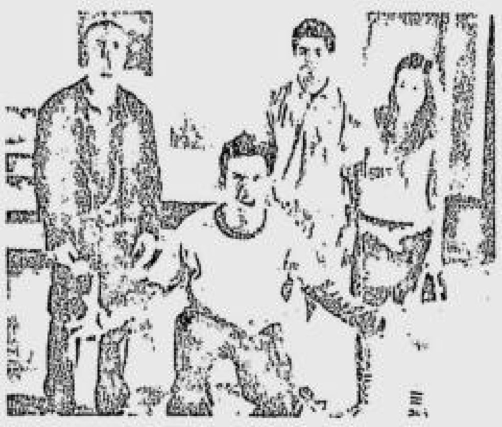
He's very methodical and takes time with things. I'm very impulsive like on a decision we made yesterday. But (when we travel), he packs at the last minute while I pack three days ahead with all the kids' stuff and five different things. I like to organize each moment of our travel but he likes to be more (spontaneous). But we appreciate each other. We need it. I need to be not so crazy about things.

(*More on Sunday*)

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL

(Inquirer Entertainment is running this MMFF guide to help moviegoers plan their holiday cinema tour. The MMFF runs from Dec. 25 to Jan. 7, 2007.)



Super Noypi

Stars John Prats, Jennylyn Mercado, Mark Herras, Katrina Halili, Polo Ravales, Sandara Park, Andrew Muhlach, Aubrey Miles, Monsour del Rosario

Directed by Quark Henares

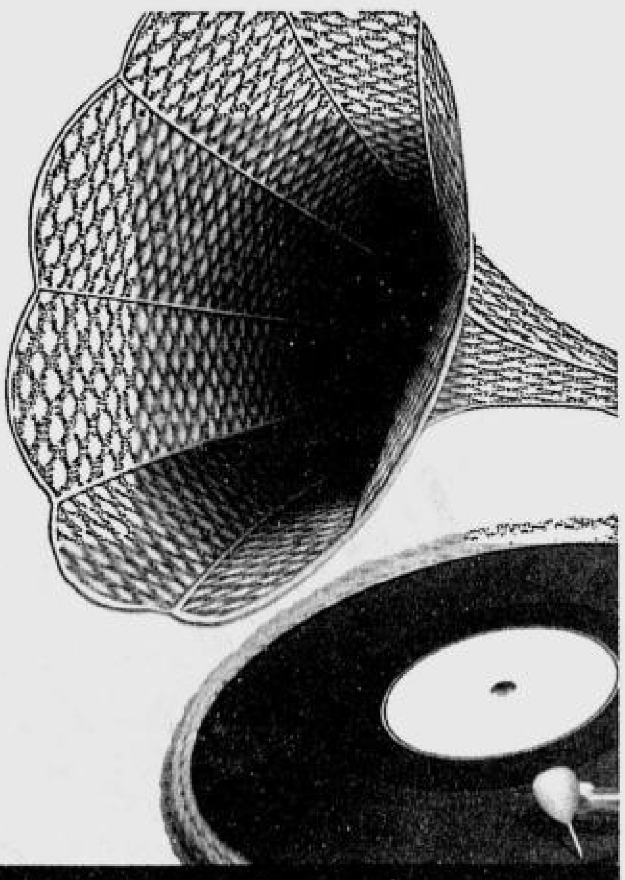
"Spy Kids" meet "The Incredibles." After their parents are taken hostage by an evil warlord, six suburban kids learn that their moms and dads are super-heroes and that they have all inherited super-human powers. Regal hopes this movie will jump-start a new action adventure franchise for the annual film festival. The film boasts over 250 special effects.

Tatlong Baraha

Stars Lito Lapid, Mark Lapid, Maynard Lapid, Phoemela Baranda, Jackie Rice, Bearwin Meily, Monsour del Rosario

Directed by Toto Natividad

During the Spanish period, three ordinary citizens were bestowed with special powers so they could defend their countrymen from ruthless Spaniards. Fast forward to the present, three do-gooders, also called Tatlong Baraha, are still saving schoolkids from kidnappers, zombies and gun-toting clowns. The heroes—Leon Guerrero, Julio Valiente and Zigomar—are based on characters popularized by Sen. Lito Lapid in the past.



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Mamayang gabi, may ipamimigay pang 10 Noche Buena feasts!

Next week, mula Pasko hanggang Dec. 29

10 ang mananalo gabi-gabi ng Media Noche feasts!

At sa Bisperas ng Bagong Taon malalaman na kung sino ang

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For the Dec. 18-22, 2006 draws, 10 Noche Buena feasts to be given away daily!

For Dec. 25-29, 2006 draws, 10 Media Noche feasts to be given away daily!

The 10 daily winners will be announced on A Rosy Life (for Monday-Thursday winners) the following night (Tuesday-Friday) and on Startalk (for Friday winners) the following day (Saturday).

All text entries automatically qualify for the grand draw on SOP on Dec. 31, 2006 for the Electronic Draw of the P1,000,000.00 Grand Prize.

GMA

FRIDAY,
DECEMBER 22, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER H1

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

LIVING Stars

THE SINGER welcomes Living Stars to her "humble home."

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

SHE SPRUCED up the Christmas tree with stuffed toys in time for a children's party on the weekend that we visited.

Jamie's joys

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

HOME BODY

A VISITOR EXCLAIMS, "THIS looks like a hotel!" And singer Jamie Rivera demurs, "Welcome to my humble home."

There is, indeed, a feel of modesty about the interiors, though the house is decked with holiday decor.

Jamie subscribes to minimalism. "Notice," she says, "that the design is in the details, like the balustrades and the beveled glass doors."

JAMIE'S/ H4

JAMIE whips up Japanese specialties on the *teppan* table and has become more health-conscious these days.

SHE SAYS her daughter loves the "new-ness" of their minimalist home.

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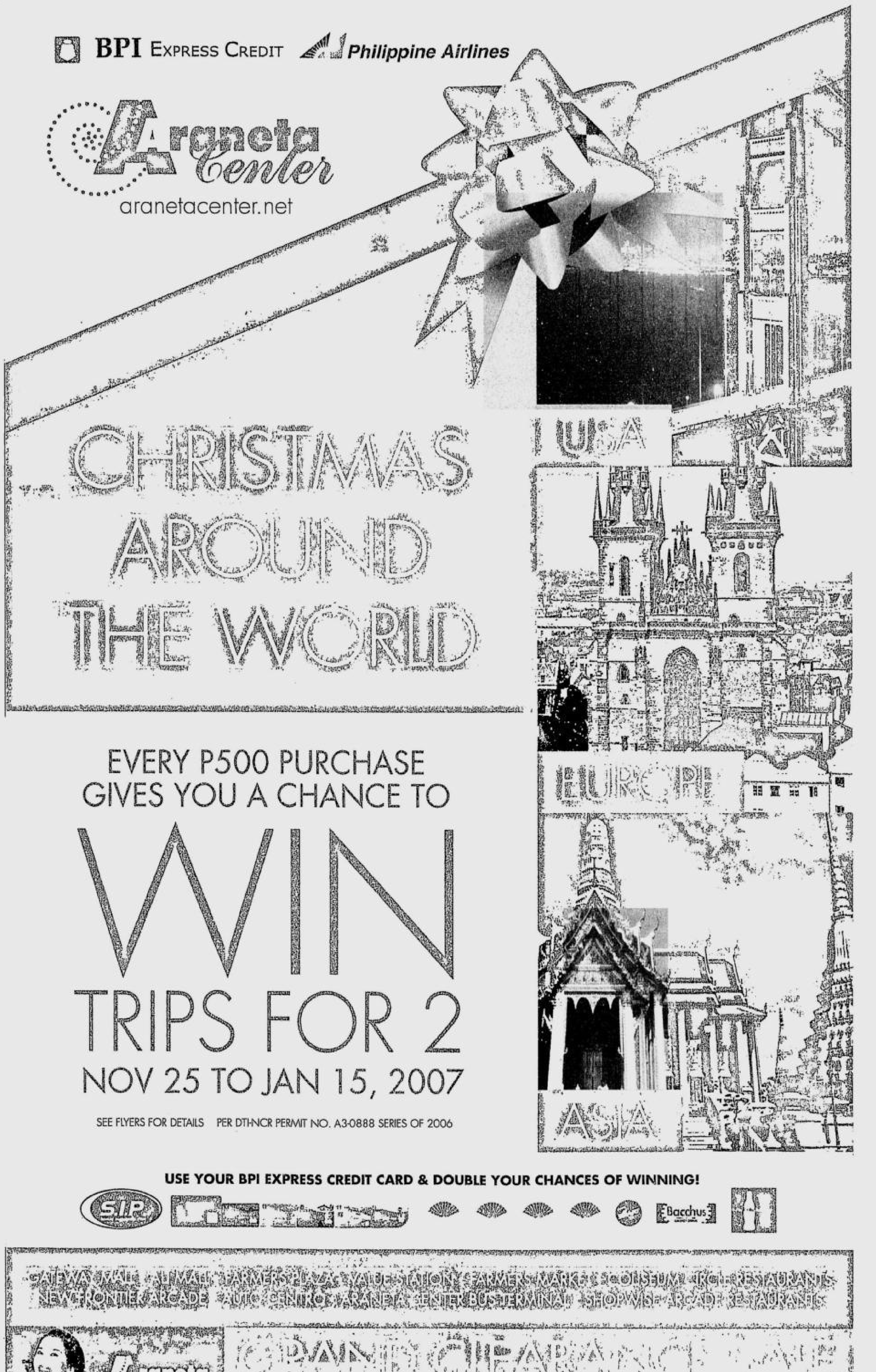
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BRITNEY SPEARS

PARIS HILTON

H'wood's best & worst celeb dog owners

Tail Tales

NEW YORK—WHEN IT COMES TO celebrity dog-parenting skills, Oprah Winfrey is tops and Britney Spears is the world's worst, according to an online vote by readers of two dog magazines.

"Britney was the overwhelming choice" for worst celebrity dog owner for 2006, Hilary O'Hagan, editor of The New York Dog and The Hollywood Dog magazines, said in a statement.

"She once had three Chihuahuas… and never left home without at least one of them," O'Hagan said. "As soon as she met K-Fed and had kids they (the dogs) disappeared."

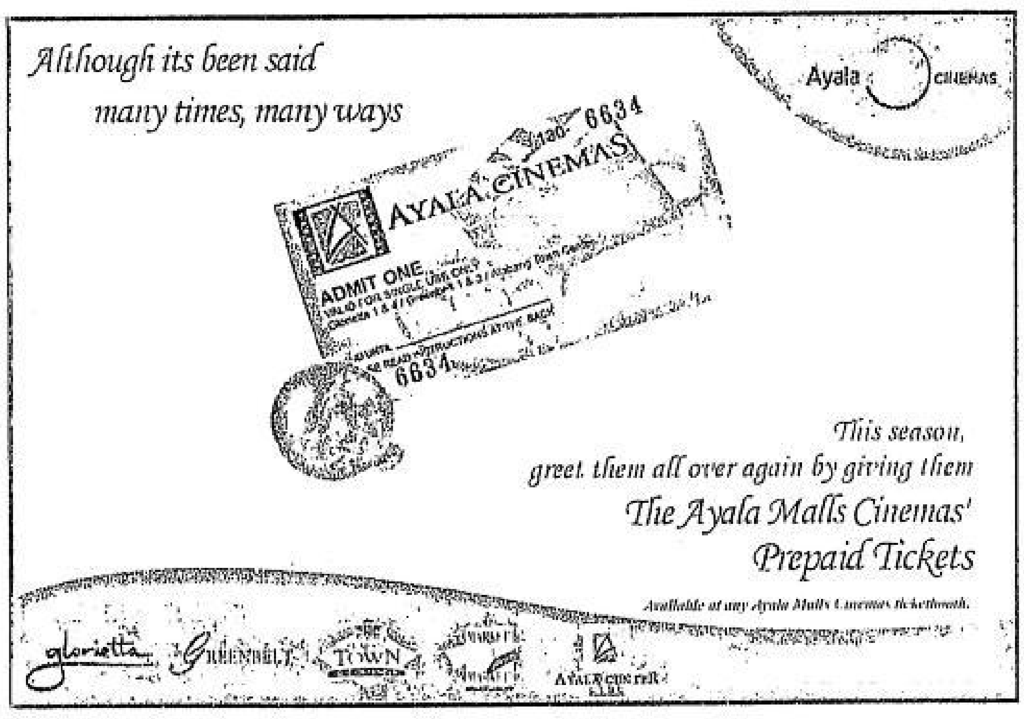
Spears has filed for divorce from aspiring rapper Kevin Federline. The 25-year-old pop singer and Federline, 28, have a 1-year-old son, Sean Preston, and a 3-month-old son, Jayden James.

Paris Hilton, 2005's "worst" winner, placed second for "treating her dogs like accessories," the magazines said.

Winfrey, who owns five dogs, was voted this year's best celebrity dog owner. She replaced 2005 winner Joss Stone, and beat Tori Spelling, Nicollette Sheridan and Beth Ostrosky, Howard Stern's girlfriend.

Voting took place online over a three-month period. Results were not scientifically representative of the magazines' readers, and the total number of votes won't be released, O'Hagan said.

AP


Although its been said many times, many ways

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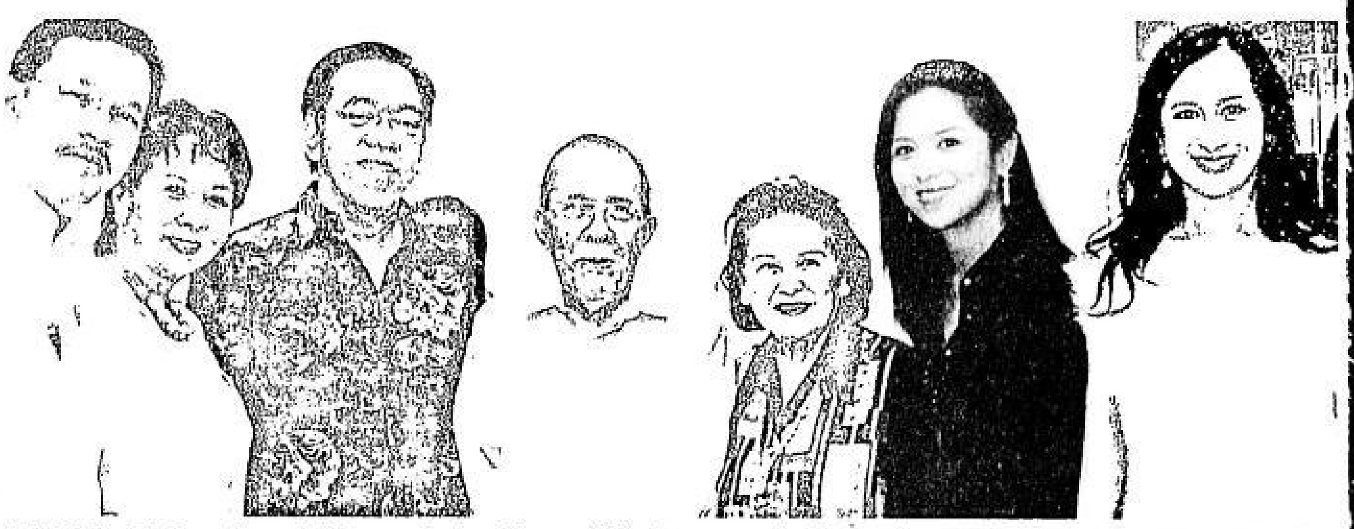
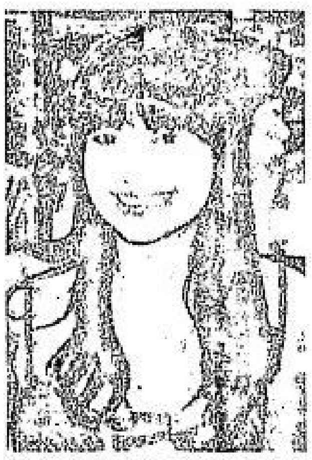
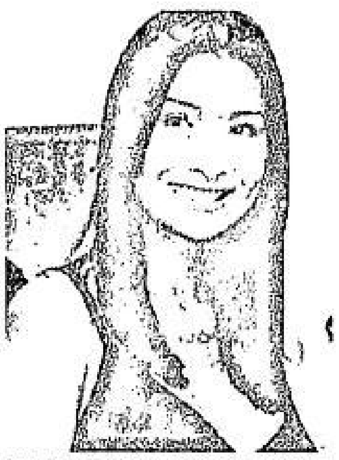


FROM left, Ric Camaligan, Lali Suzara, Jacky Atienza, Eddie Romero and wife Carolina, Christine Dayrit and sister Michelle Dayrit-Soliven



ANNE CURTIS

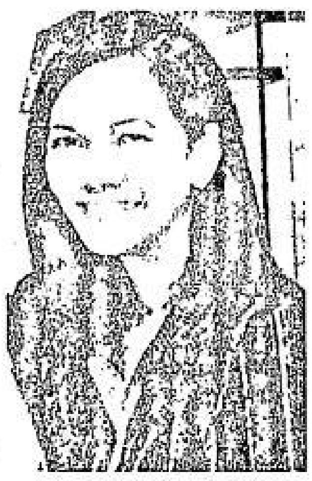


PHOEMELA BARANDA

Sparkling gems, bright stars, one lovely evening

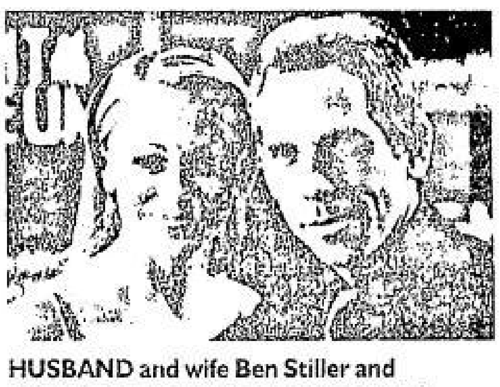
PARTY! PARTY!

Christine Dayrit, head of the Cinema Evaluation Board, invited friends from the movie industry to launch her family's Miladay Jewels at The Block in SM North Edsa. Among the guests were Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., Ric Camaligan of SM malls, Jacky Atienza of the Film Development Council of the Philippines, National Artist for Film Eddie Romero, lawyer Joji Alonso, actresses Phoemela Baranda and Anne Curtis, and filmmaker Dante Mendoza.

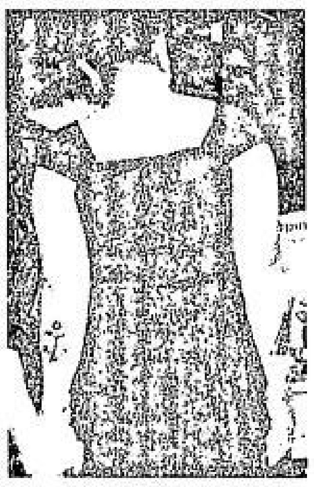


JOJI ALONSO

FAITH CUNETA

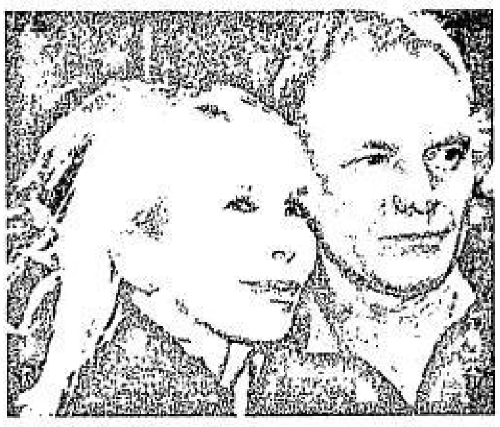


HUSBAND and wife Ben Stiller and Christine Taylor arrive at the New York premiere of "Night at the Museum." REUTERS

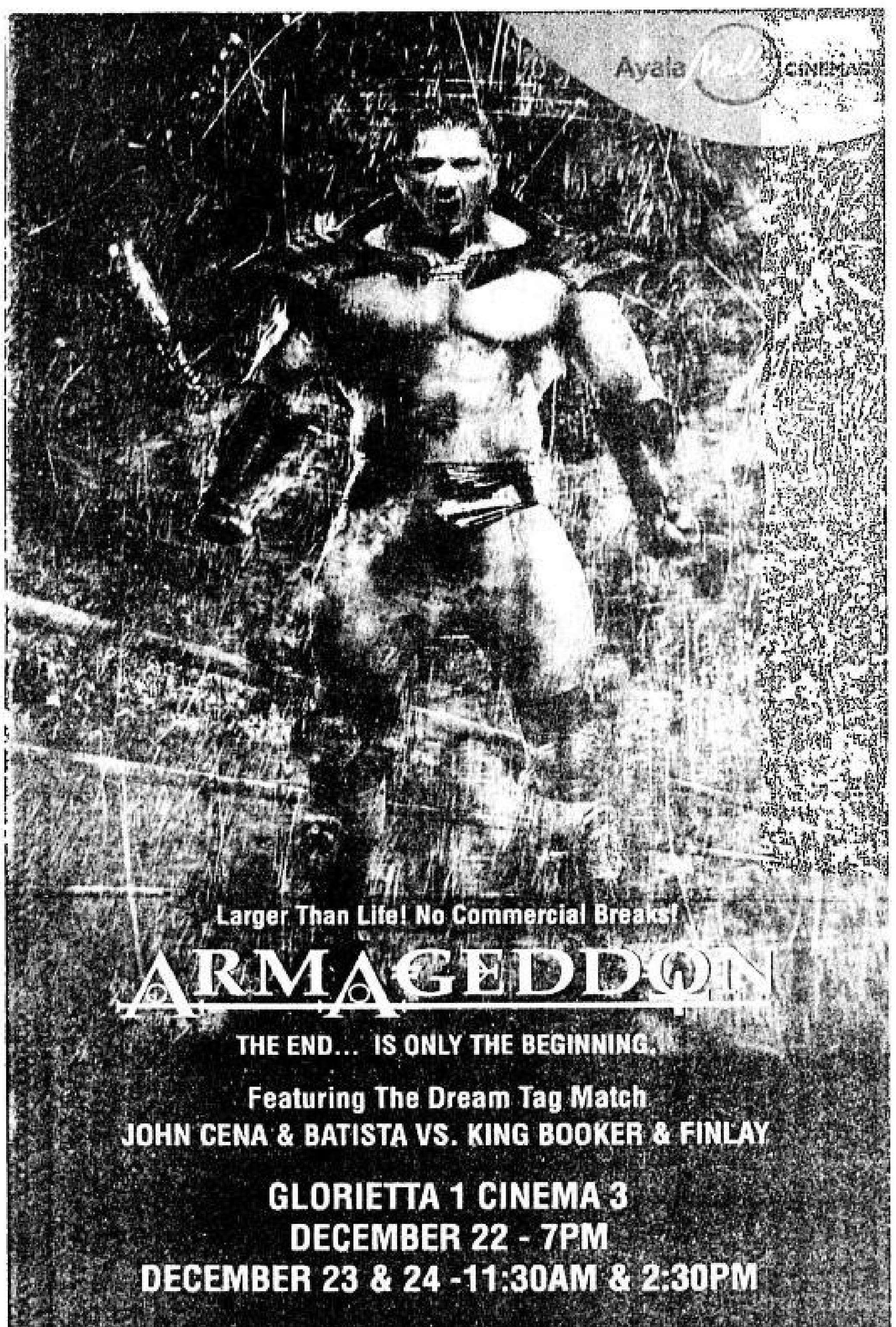


KELLY Osbourne displays some of her tatoos at the world premiere of "It's a BoyGirl Thing" in London. AFP

MICKEY and Jan Rooney also at "Museum" preem in New York. REUTERS



STING and wife Trudi, also at the "BoyGirl Thing" preem in London. AFP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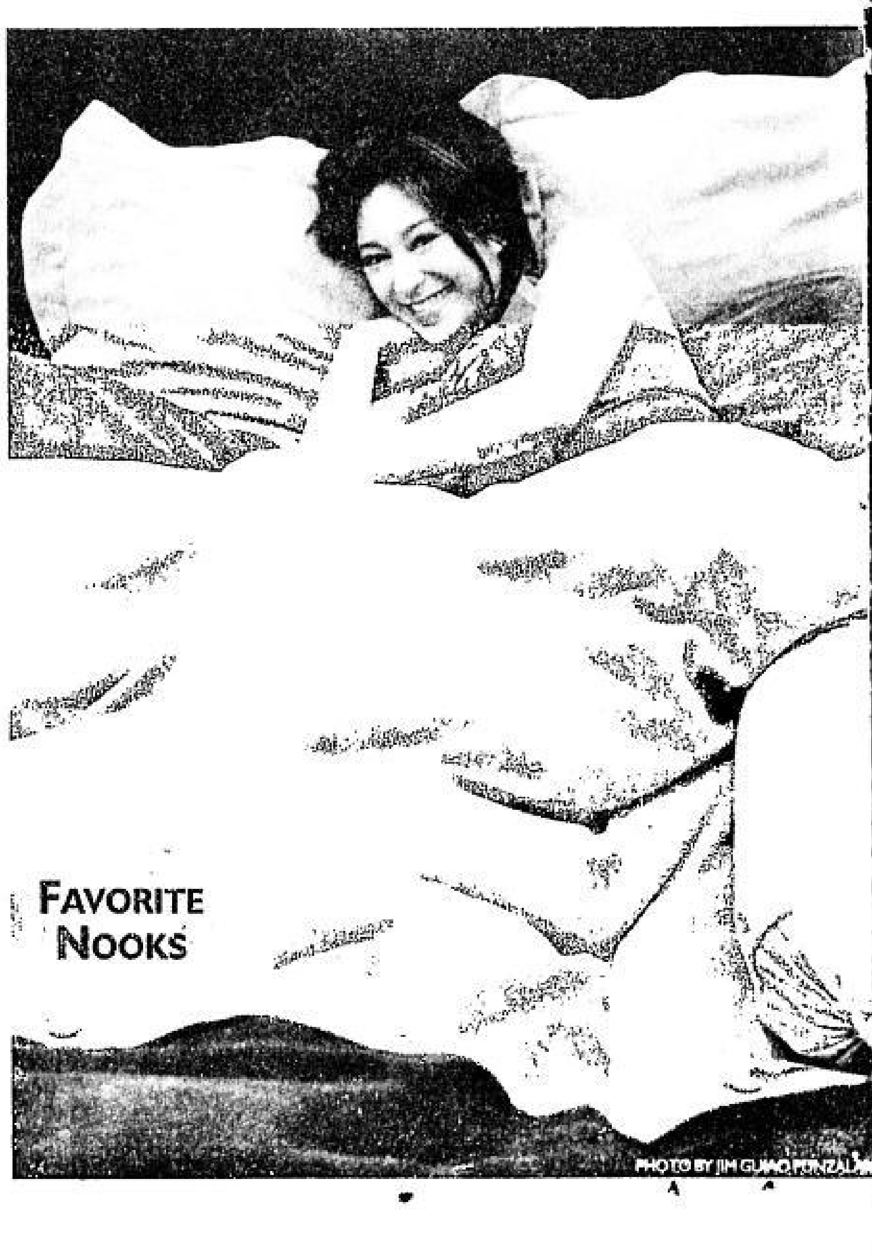
RUFA MAE QUINTO

My bedroom is very Japanese, very Zen. It's relaxing and comfortable. I also like the dressing room, designed by Carmi Martin, which is all-white. White looks cool and refreshing. Other favorites are the dining room and bathroom. I also feel content and refreshed every time I look at the pool.

Bayani San Diego Jr.



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TESSIE TOMAS

I AM INTO SPIRITUAL AND NEW AGE books. My favorites are Gary Zukav's "The Seat of the Soul" and Thomas Moore's "Soulmates." I also like inspiring novels like Mitch Albom's "Tuesdays with Morrie." Last Christmas, my husband (musician-marine biologist Roger Pullin) gifted me with Amy Tan's novel, "Saving Fish from Drowning." It's about a group of tourists who encounter all sorts of problems while on a holiday in Myanmar. On a recent trip to London, I bought Roger Lewis' "The Life and Death of Peter Sellers," which was turned into an HBO film. I find this comic's life interesting.

BOOKS

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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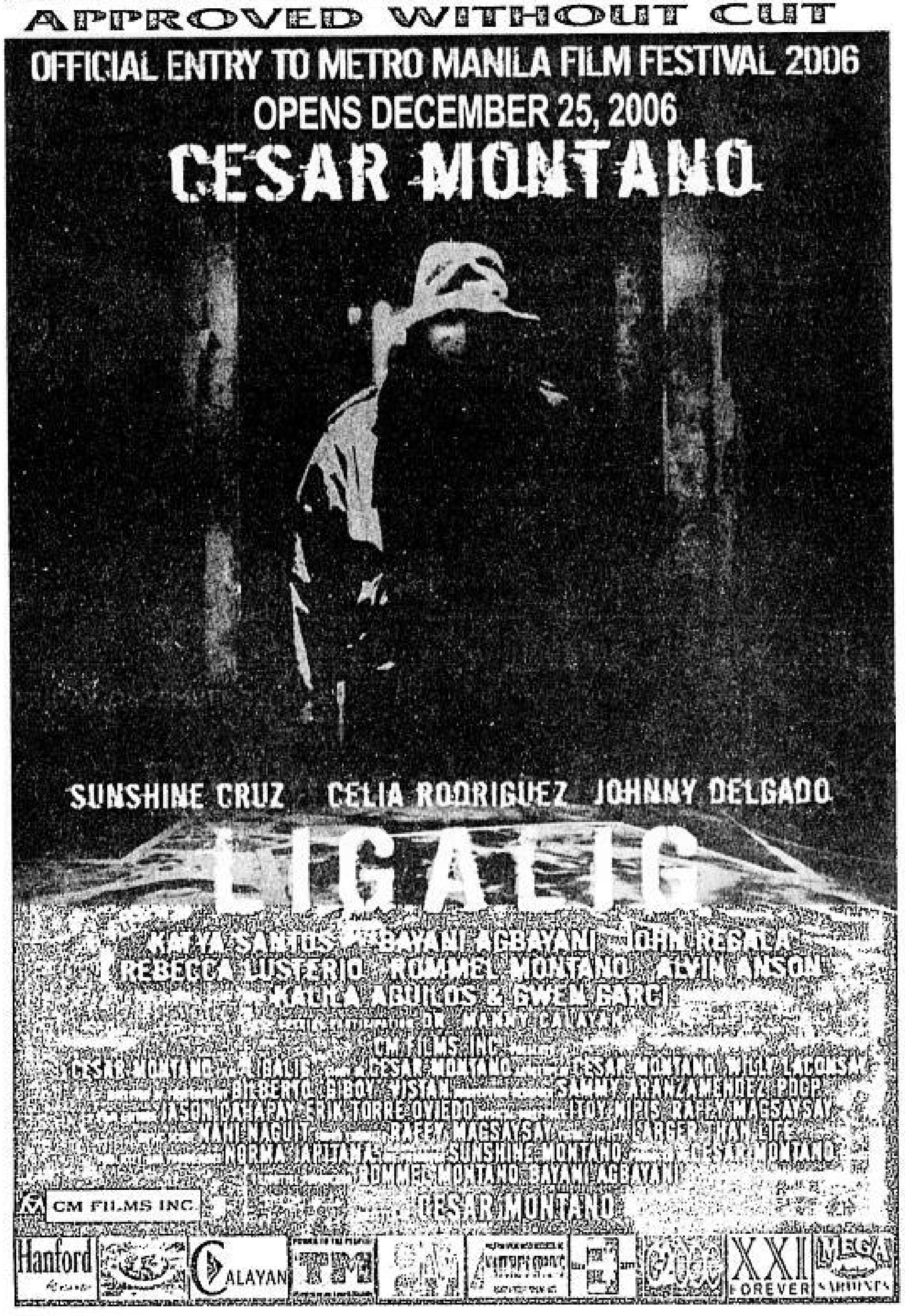

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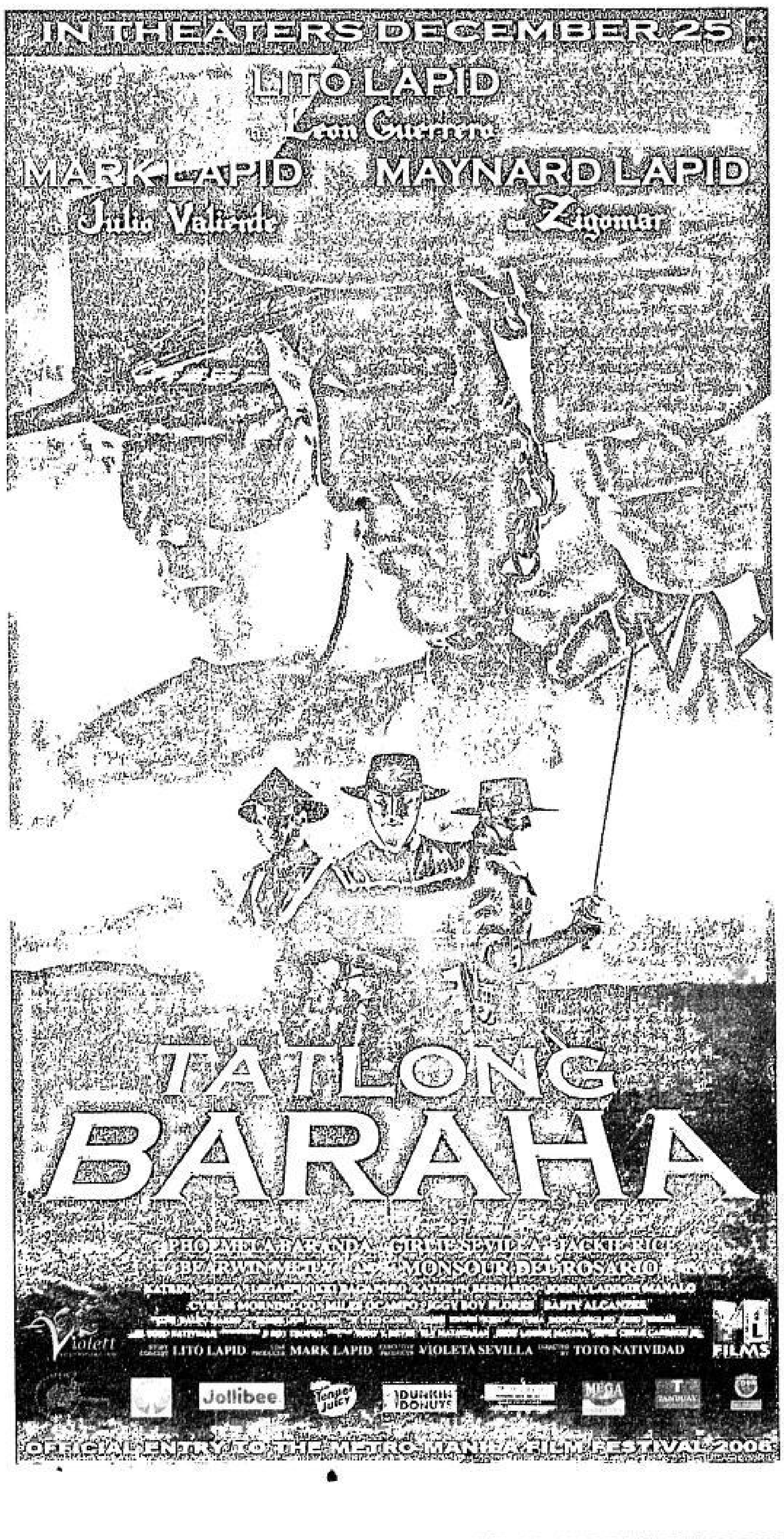

IN THEATERS DECEMBER 25
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MARK LAPID MAYNARD LAPID
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PHOEMELA BARANDA GIRLIE SEVILLA JACKIE RICE
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1	TENACIOUS D	1:40, 4:00, 6:20 8:40, 11:00
2	A GOOD YEAR	2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:00 PG-13
3	DECK THE HALLS	12:50, 3:10, 5:30 G
3	CASINO ROYALE	7:50, 11:00 PG-13
4	HAPPY FEET	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 G

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. Nos. 898-1440-41

CASINO ROYALE 007 PG13 1:05,4:00,6:55	**HAPPY FEET** G 1:10,3:30,5:50	**A GOOD YEAR** PG13 2:30 5:00,7:30
TENACIOUS D IN: THE PICK OF DESTINY 1:50,4:00,6:10	**SPIRIT TRAP** R13 1:45,3:55 **BORAT** R18 6:00,8:00	**THE NATIVITY STORY** PG13 1:20,3:30,5:40,7:50

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440-41

SHANG CINEPLEX

① TENACIOUS D MTRCB R 13 12 40 3.00, 5 20, 7 40 10 00
② THE NATIVITY MTRCB GP 1.20, 3.30, 5.40, 7 50, 10.00
③ HAPPY FEET MTRCB GP 2 30, 5 00 7 30 10 00
④ CASINO ROYALE MTRCB PG 13 1 25 7 05
A GOOD YEAR MTRCB PG 13 4 30, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE: THE PRODUCERS / RENT MTRCB PG-13 12.45 6 15 MTRCB R-13 3 30, 9 00

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CINEMA 1	CASINO ROYALE 007	12:10 , 3:20 , 6:30 , 9:40 PG-13
CINEMA 2	A GOOD YEAR	12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 PG-13

PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3	DECK THE HALLS //THE NATIVITY	11:40, 1:50, 4:00, //6:00, 8:20, 10:35 GP
CINEMA 4	TENACIOUS D	11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:20, 10:35 R-13
CINEMA 5	HAPPY FEET	11:00, 1:15, 3:35, 5:55, 8:15, 10:35 GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

DEC 27 2006	"Kyla" Give Love On Christmas Day	8:00 PM
DEC 28 2008	Truefaith Mofofly Gуji Florenza	8:30 PM

TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
DEC. 23 , 2006	Mishka Adams	9:00 PM
Jan. 16 , 23 , 30 , 2007	Dyords Ko Po	8:30 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 118
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION PLS CALL 721-6126 OR 721-0636

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX

1	TENACIOUS - D
2	THE NATIVITY STORY
3	HAPPY FEET
4	CASINO ROYAL 007/A GOOD YEAR
PREMIERE	THE PRODUCERS / RENT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4234 / 816.4216

1	CASINO ROYAL 007
2	HAPPY FEET
3	THE NATIVITY STORY
4	SPIRIT TRAP

Starmall (Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160

3	SHAOLIN VS. EEVILDEAD - 2
4	KAMASUTRA - 3
5	RESERVED

metropolis star (ALABANG) tel. 8504285. 5433994

1	MAKAMUNDO
2	KAMASUTRA - 3
3	HAPPY FEET
4	HUWAG KANG LILINGON

THEATRES

1	CASINO ROYAL 007
2	ANG PAMANA
3	REYNA

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC

1	THE MARINE
2	FLAG OF OUR FATHER
3	RESRVED
4	RESRVED

Filinvest Festival Cinema (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1	TENACIOUS - D
2	THE NATIVITY STORY / INANG YAYA
3	SHAOLIN VS. EEVILDEAD - 2
4	HAPPY FEET
5	SPIRIT TRAP
6	CASINO ROYAL 007
7	THE COVENANT
8	DECK THE HALLS
9	THE SANTA CLAUSE - 3
10	HUWAG KANG LILINGON / REYNA

Blue Wave Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1	HUWAG KANG LILINGON
2	THE NATIVITY
3	HAPPY FEET
4	RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1	SHAOLIN 2 VS, EVIL DEAD
2	SNAKE ON A PLANE
3	MAKAMUNDO
4	RESERVED
5	RESERVED

THE MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	REYNA
2	THE NATIVITY
3	MAKAMUNDO
4	RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	SHAOLIN 2 VS, EVIL DEAD
2	REYNA
3	KAMASUTRA

Center Mall Cinema Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074) - (4449346)

1	BOA
2	PITONG DALAGITA

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	HISTORY OF VIOLENCE
2	GRANDMAS BOY
3	THE MARINE
4	FEAST

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	WORLD TRADE CENTER
2	REYNA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS (Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1	TENACIOUS - D
2	A GOOD YEAR
3	CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4	HAPPY FEET

CINEMA 2000 Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	BARNYARD
2	PITONG DALAGITA
3	THE GRUDGE - 2
4	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	FEAST
4	ANG PAMANA

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	BARANG
2	REYNA
3	TEXAS CHAIN SAW MASSACRE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	REYNA
2	THE RETURN
3	CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4	STEP UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Mandel) tel (044) 795.3320

1	HAPPY FEET
2	THE RETURN
3	BARANG

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1	THE MARINE
2	BARANG

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4746

1	MAKAMUNDO
2	PITONG DALAGITA

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1	KAMASUTRA
2	MAKAMUNDO
3	PARAISO SA GUBAT
4	THE COVENANT

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1	FEAST
2	DARK DANCERS
3	PITONG DALAGITA
4	MAKAMUNDO
5	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MY FIRST WEDDING
2	HAPPY FEET
3	ROOM SERVICE
4	THE RETURN

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	INANG YAYA
2	THE GRUDGE- 2

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Jamie's joys

From page H1

The wooden floor has intricate embellishments made of narra and mahogany tiles.

Jamie's family moved in seven years ago, but the home still has a "new-ness" to it. That's because they divide their time between this place and her in-laws' house nearby.

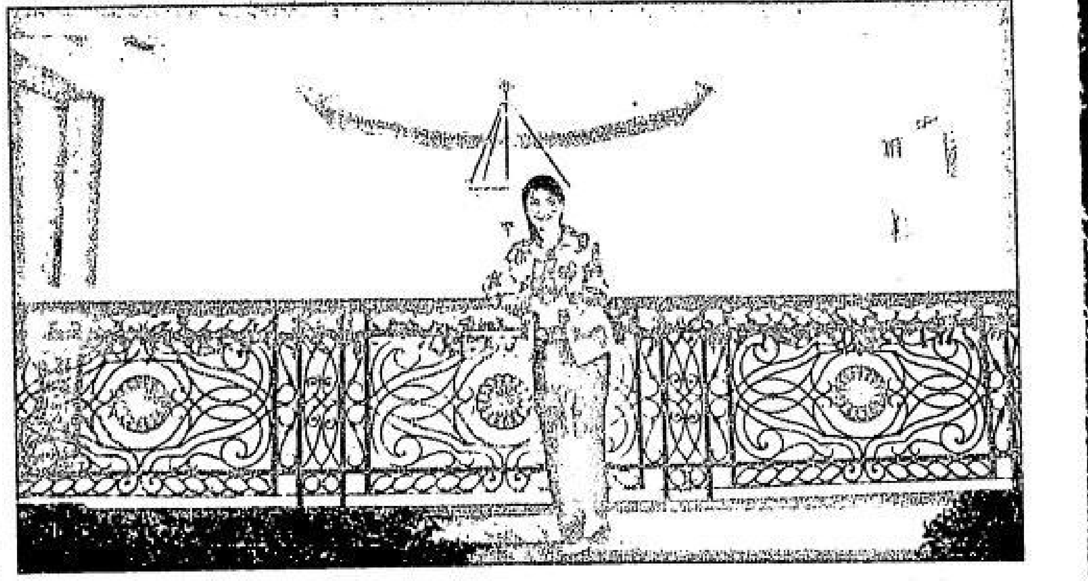
"We spend Christmas Eve with immediate relatives, but the 25th is for my husband and daughter," she explains.

This new house is "party central," where they usually entertain guests.

It's apparent from the state-of-the-art kitchen that they take dining seriously. It has a *teppan* table, where they whip up Japanese specialties.

For *noche buena*, Jamie is preparing a sumptuous but healthy repast—*galantina*, *bavette* with shrimps, herb tomato salad, beggars' chicken, Yorkshire pudding and shiitake mushroom risotto.

These days, she's also busy with advocacy work—the SOS Children's Village and the scholarship program of her high school batch (1982) at the University of Santo Tomas. "We have a fund-raising concert for our scholars on Feb. 17 at the Manila Hotel."

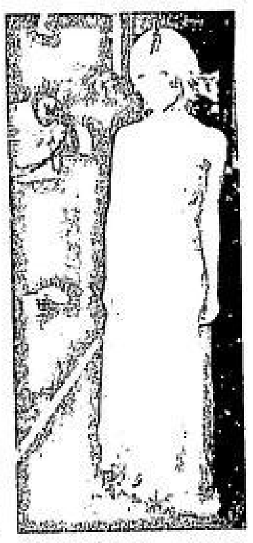


"IT'S all in the details—like the grillwork on the balustrades," says the mistress of the house.

RED CARPET

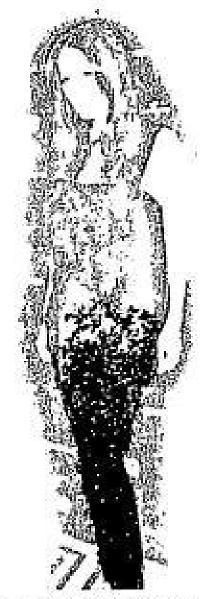
'Black Christmas' premiere in H'wood

MARY ELIZABETH WINSTEAD REUTERS

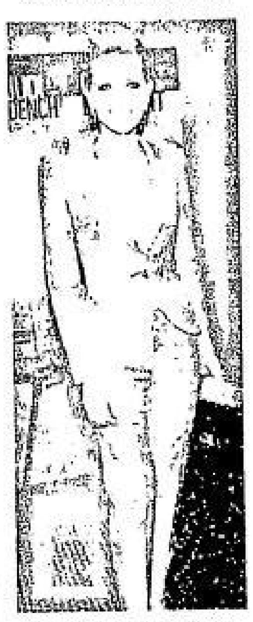


TARA REID RETUERS

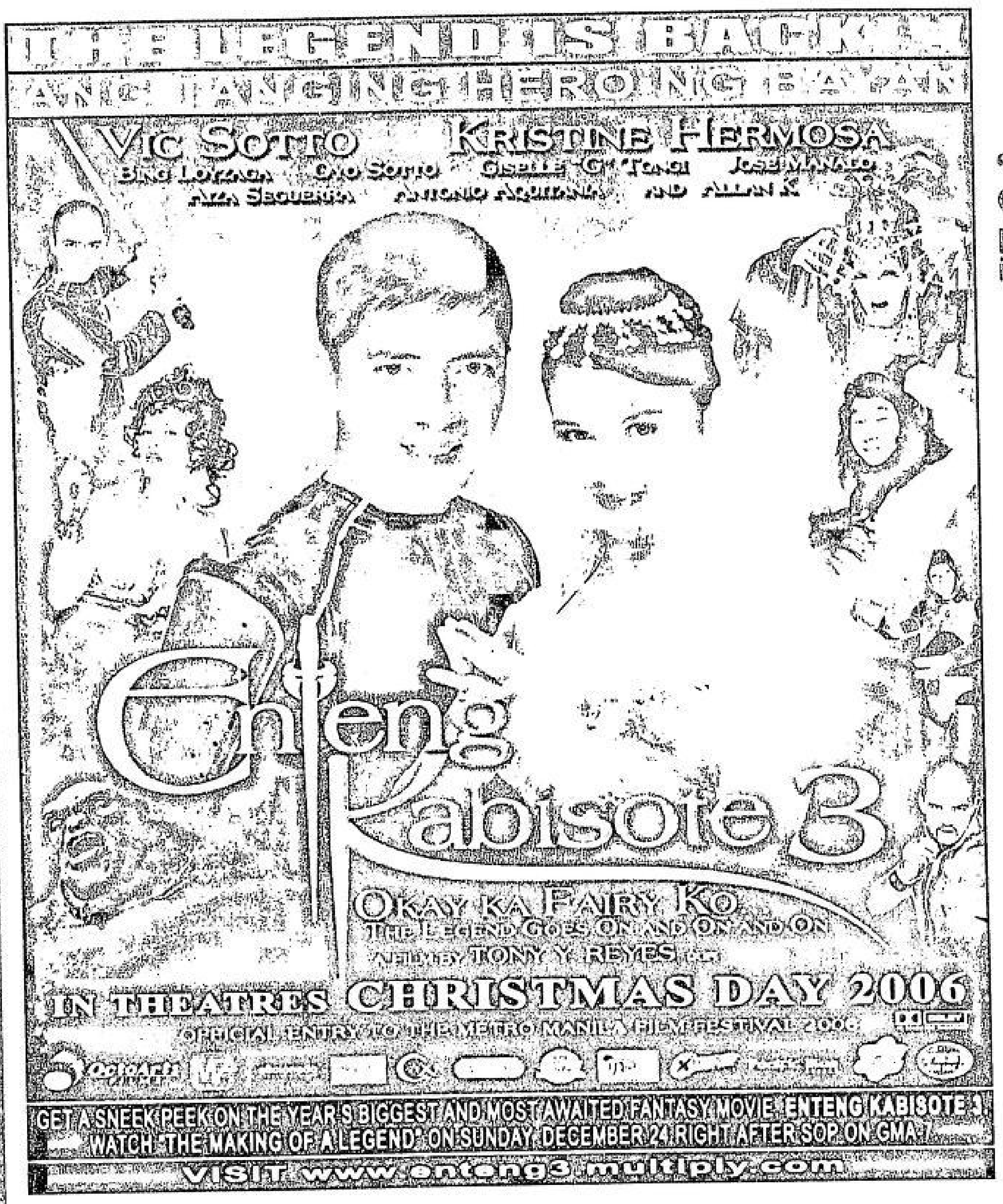
New York preems



JULIANNE MOORE, at Cinema Society & GQ screening of "Children Of Men." AFP



CATE Blanchett, at "Notes On A Scandal" screening.



THE LEGEND IS BACK!!
ANG TANGING HERO NG BAYAN
VIC SOTTO KRISTINE HERMOSA
BING LOYZAGA OYO SOTTO GISELLE "G" TONGI JOSE MANALO
AIZA SEGUERRA ANTONIO AQUITANIA AND ALLAN K
Enteng Kabisote 3
OKAY KA FAIRY KO
THE LEGEND GOES ON AND ON AND ON
A FILM BY TONY Y. REYES
IN THEATRES CHRISTMAS DAY 2006
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2006
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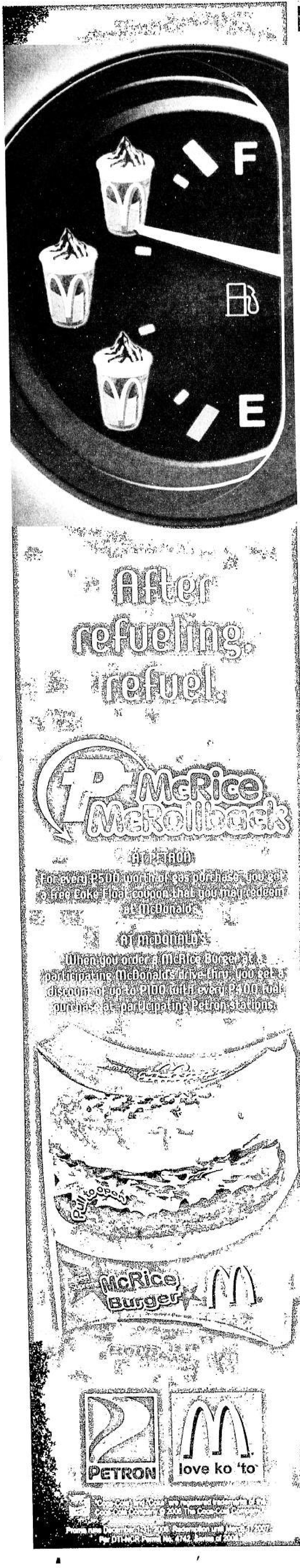
THE MOST AWAITED HORROR MOVIE OF THE YEAR
MAG-INGAT...MAKIRAMDAM...MATAKOT
RICA PERALEJO ANGELICA PANGANIBAN
AND GRETCHEN BARRETTO
TANYA GARCIA BIANCA KING AND ANA CAPRI
MATAKOT KA SA
KARMA
A FILM BY JOSE JAVIER REYES
IN THEATERS DECEMBER 25, 2006
CATCH THE STARS OF MATAKOT KA SA KARMA MALL SHOW TODAY DECEMBER 22 AT SM MANILA 4PM



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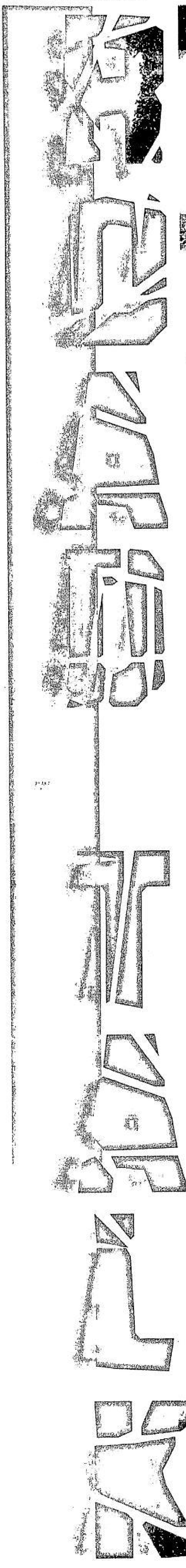

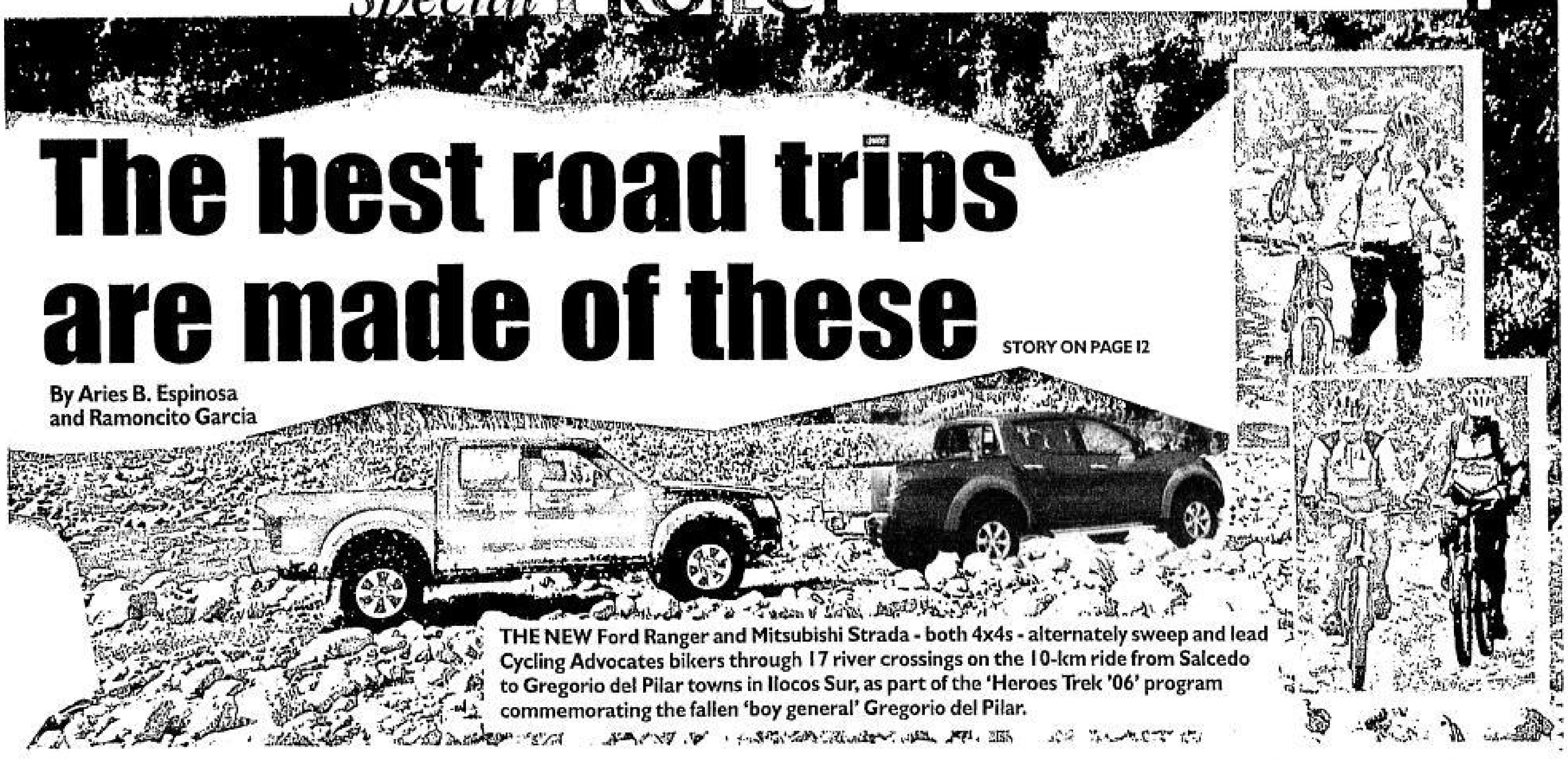

The best road trips are made of these

STORY ON PAGE I2

By Aries B. Espinosa
and Ramoncito Garcia

THE NEW Ford Ranger and Mitsubishi Strada - both 4x4s - alternately sweep and lead Cycling Advocates bikers through 17 river crossings on the 10-km ride from Salcedo to Gregorio del Pilar towns in Ilocos Sur, as part of the 'Heroes Trek '06' program commemorating the fallen 'boy general' Gregorio del Pilar.

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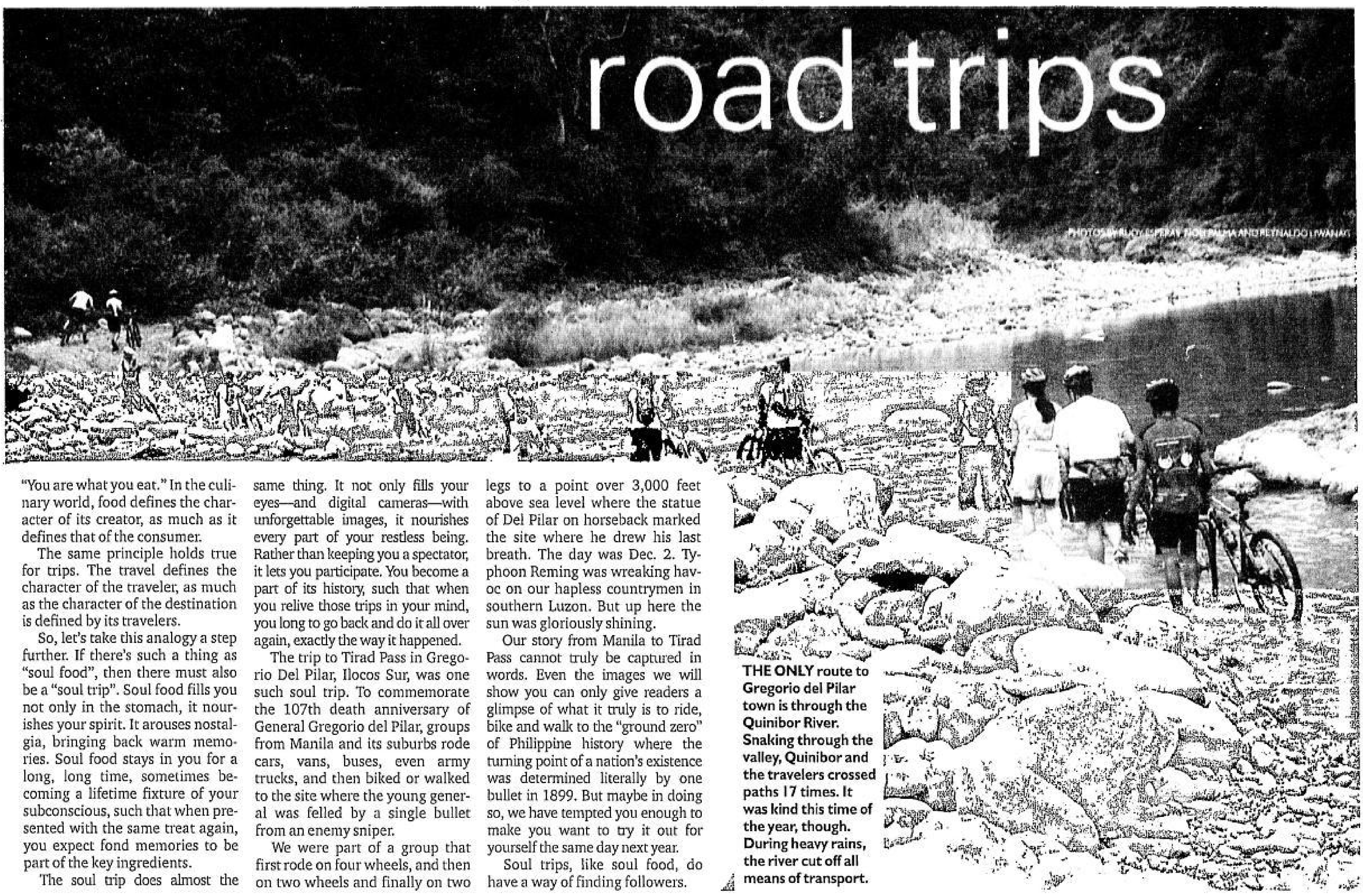
road trips



PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS, NOLI PALMA AND REYNALDO LIWANAG

"You are what you eat." In the culinary world, food defines the character of its creator, as much as it defines that of the consumer.

The same principle holds true for trips. The travel defines the character of the traveler, as much as the character of the destination is defined by its travelers.

So, let's take this analogy a step further. If there's such a thing as "soul food", then there must also be a "soul trip". Soul food fills you not only in the stomach, it nourishes your spirit. It arouses nostalgia, bringing back warm memories. Soul food stays in you for a long, long time, sometimes becoming a lifetime fixture of your subconscious, such that when presented with the same treat again, you expect fond memories to be part of the key ingredients.

The soul trip does almost the same thing. It not only fills your eyes—and digital cameras—with unforgettable images, it nourishes every part of your restless being. Rather than keeping you a spectator, it lets you participate. You become a part of its history, such that when you relive those trips in your mind, you long to go back and do it all over again, exactly the way it happened.

The trip to Tirad Pass in Gregorio Del Pilar, Ilocos Sur, was one such soul trip. To commemorate the 107th death anniversary of General Gregorio del Pilar, groups from Manila and its suburbs rode cars, vans, buses, even army trucks, and then biked or walked to the site where the young general was felled by a single bullet from an enemy sniper.

We were part of a group that first rode on four wheels, and then on two wheels and finally on two legs to a point over 3,000 feet above sea level where the statue of Del Pilar on horseback marked the site where he drew his last breath. The day was Dec. 2. Typhoon Reming was wreaking havoc on our hapless countrymen in southern Luzon. But up here the sun was gloriously shining.

Our story from Manila to Tirad Pass cannot truly be captured in words. Even the images we will show you can only give readers a glimpse of what it truly is to ride, bike and walk to the "ground zero" of Philippine history where the turning point of a nation's existence was determined literally by one bullet in 1899. But maybe in doing so, we have tempted you enough to make you want to try it out for yourself the same day next year.

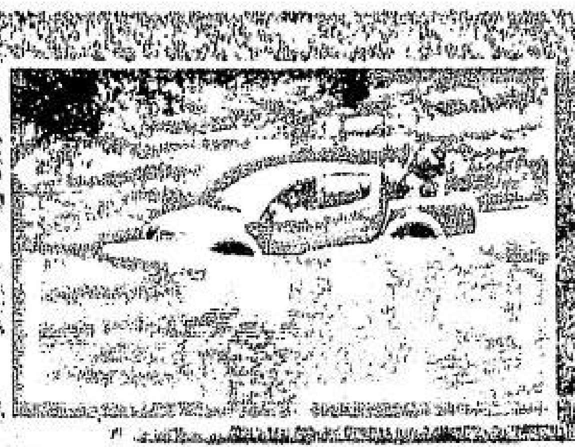
Soul trips, like soul food, do have a way of finding followers.

THE ONLY route to Gregorio del Pilar town is through the Quinibor River. Snaking through the valley, Quinibor and the travelers crossed paths 17 times. It was kind this time of the year, though. During heavy rains, the river cut off all means of transport.

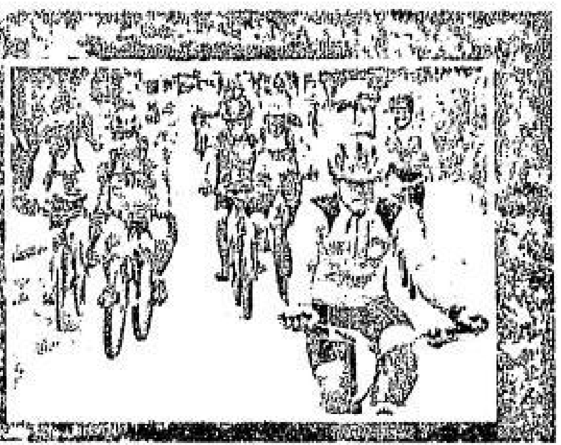
Our story from Manila to Tirad Pass cannot truly be captured in words. Even the images we will show you can only give readers a glimpse of what it truly is to ride, bike and walk to the 'ground zero' of Philippine history where the turning point of a nation's existence was determined literally by one bullet in 1899

YOU'VE been dunked! The river crossings are often just waist deep, but that's enough to knock reckless amateurs off their bikes.

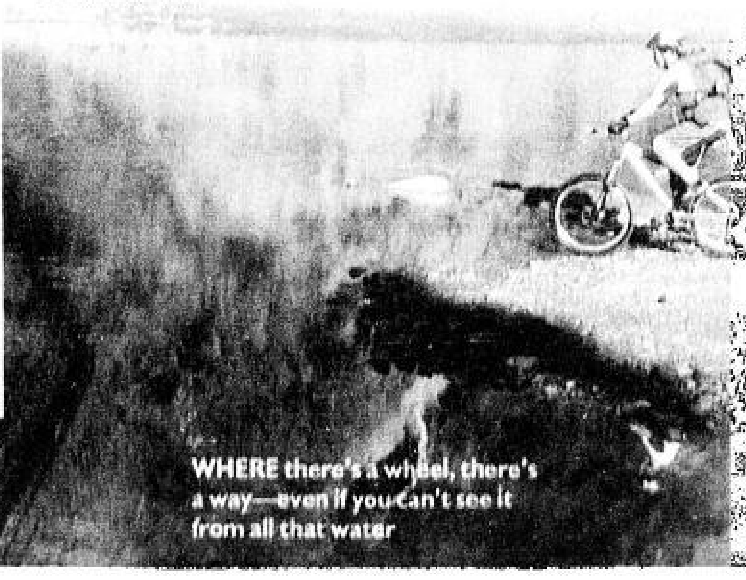
NO FREELOADERS here. The climb from the river bed to Gregorio del Pilar sometimes required riders to go on foot. And even then, every step was relished.



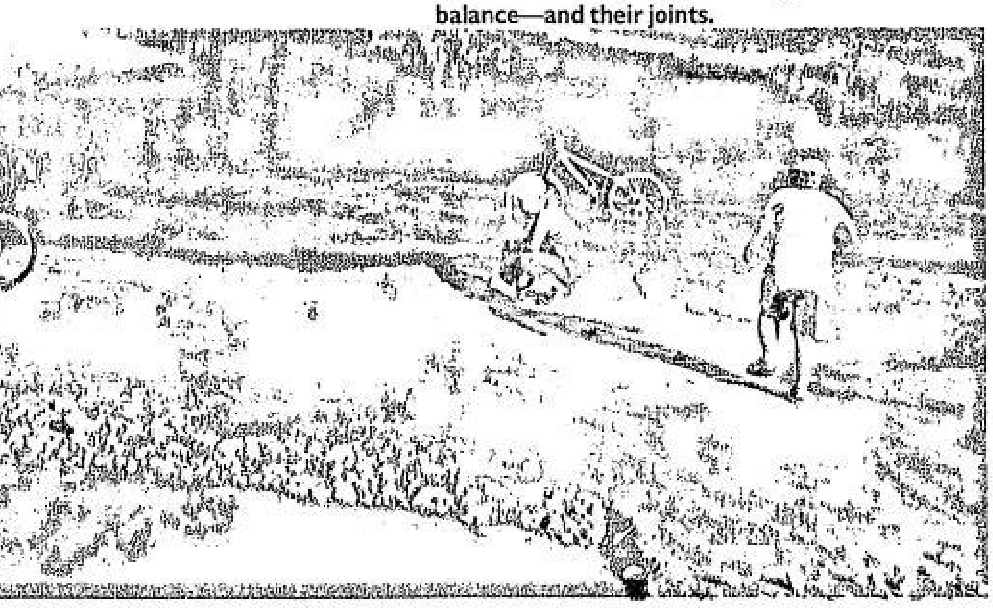
MITSUBISHI Strada showed cool form—and power—when it was needed most

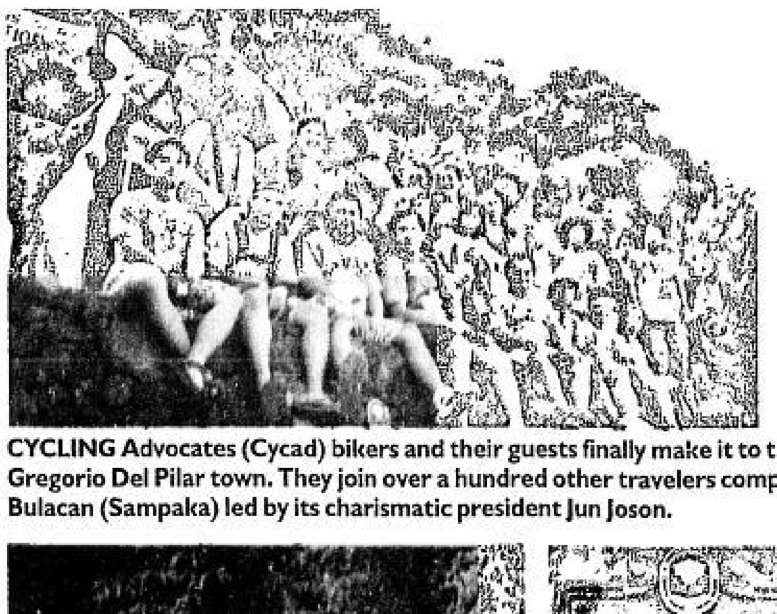


SALCEDO is where rubber gets the last taste of concrete, and then 10 kms of sand, stone and running water challenge riders' balance—and their joints.

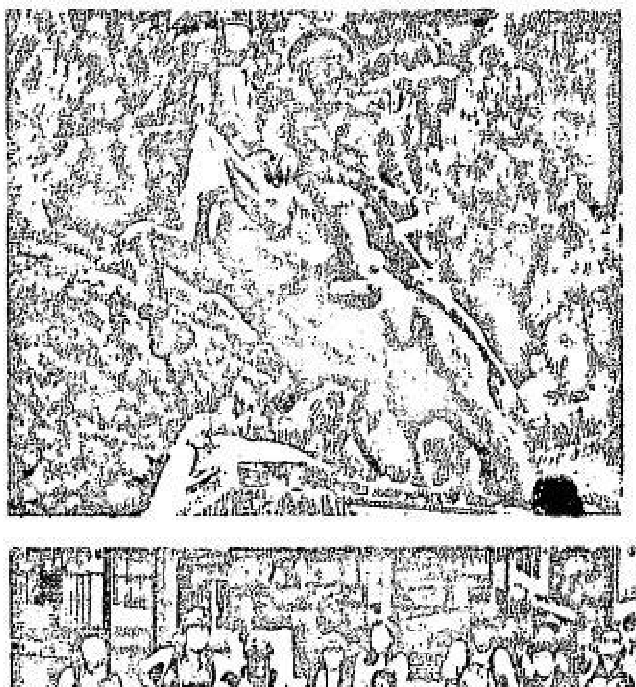


WHERE there's a wheel, there's a way—even if you can't see it from all that water

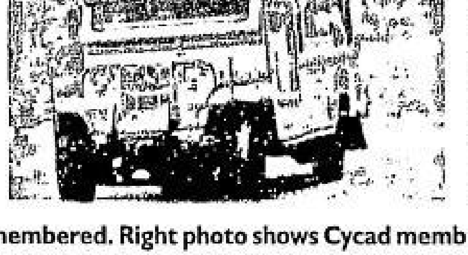




CYCLING Advocates (Cycad) bikers and their guests finally make it to the Tirad Pass Shrine after a 4-km trek from Gregorio Del Pilar town. They join over a hundred other travelers comprising the Samahang Pangkasaysayan ng Bulacan (Sampaka) led by its charismatic president Jun Joson.



IMMORTAL above the clouds. Gregorio del Pilar's heroism bought 5 precious hours for the future President Emilio Aguinaldo. The battle of Tirad Pass, one of the key battles during the Filipino-American War in the twilight of the 19th century, left 54 soldiers dead—52 of them from the Filipino defenders' side. Del Pilar was just 24 when he was killed.



WE CAME, we saw, we remembered. Right photo shows Cycad members and guests at Gregorio del Pilar municipal center: Emilio Conde, Edwin Dallarte, Rojjie Errua, Carlito Gomez, Roberto Gomez (bike mechanic), Reynaldo Liwanag, Roberto Liwanag, Romeo Liwayway, Florencio Lopez, Noli Palma, Ramoncito 'Monchie' Garcia (Cycad president), Leon de Belen, Niño de Belen, Roland Espino, Alexandra Espino, Aries Espinosa, Liza Fetalino, Resty Garcia, Eden Liwanag, Pedmar Manalo, Rolando Nacor, Olga Poblete, Allen, Mabel and Mikhaela Razon, Maridel Roxas, Oliver Templo, Ronald Torno and Eric Valientes.

The 2007 Aveo Sedan: for the adventurous

CHEVROLET IS READY TO ROCK the small car market with the introduction of the new 2007 Chevrolet Aveo Sedan, which promises to captivate the young and sophisticated motorist with its fresh, colorful spirit and modern design. The Aveo Sedan's concept includes the most spacious interior in its class, delivered in luxury and comfort, and world-class production standards that guarantee its quality.

The Aveo Sedan is Chevrolet's response to discriminating customer needs. The 1.4L Aveo's long list of equipment and features which includes the high performance Euro suspension tuning system-ensures that it will deliver the best value and most competitive pricing in its class.

The 2007 Chevrolet Aveo Sedan features a body-frame that gives it a large appearance and stylishly spacious interior at the same time, providing superior comfort levels with plenty of leg and headroom that will easily accommodate up to five passengers.

Francis Burdett, president and managing director of General Motors Philippines, said: "The Chevrolet Aveo is a brand new model, designed for optimal consumer benefits with excellent functionality and practicality. It's truly an outstanding engineering achievement, made possible through collaboration among GM's worldwide engineering teams, including North America, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and Australia. Its attractive design was produced by world renowned Italian design house Italdesign Guigiaro Design Studio."

"The Aveo will appeal to sophisticated young men and women who have more than just a streak of adventure and passion in their personality, but who also appreciate value for their money," explained Burdett

William Botwick, president, General Motors Southeast Asia operations and president, General Motors Thailand said: "We are launching the Aveo Sedan at exactly the right time, as it delivers unmatched performance and functionality in its class, is very competitively priced and delivers fuel efficiency. We are confident that young, discerning and sophisticated professionals, as well as single-car families, will find the Aveo sedan superior to any car in its class and price range."

"In addition to its superior design, every component used in the Aveo Sedan's production process is guaranteed to be of international standard quality," added Botwick.

The Aveo also incorporates the high performance Euro Ride Suspension, which was especially enhanced to accommodate the tough road conditions found in the Philippines. It's a car that truly makes a statement.

Design-wise, this car is outstanding. The Chevrolet Aveo Sedan's front grille was designed to look bigger and wider while the Chevrolet bowtie logo was enlarged. Frontal lamps are multi focus reflection, which features the front high beam/low beam and signal lights in a single casing. The front engine hood sports likewise a stylish design to go with the rest of the car and to match the new front grille and frontal lamps.

The sides of the Chevrolet Aveo Sedan feature flared wheel arches allowing it to achieve a more aggressive sporty look. Side view mirrors come in two tone colors and are larger than before, which gives better visibility and clearer view of traffic. The rear stands out with a triangular shaped tail lamp casing, which hides two round lamps and a rear fog light. The 3rd brake light is embedded on the rear window area, which achieves a neat and tidy appearance and avoids the usual protrusion problems of other antennae.

Large air vents comes in the innovative round designs, which allow you to rotate it 360 degrees for better air flow adjustability and optimal dispersion of cool air inside the vehicle.

Front seats can be adjusted forward and backwards and are also height adjustable. Compartments are designed into the sides of the seats for extra functionality and practicality.

The Aveo Sedan comes with top-of-the-line safety features such as dual airbags, ABS, 3rd brake lamp and front and rear fog lamps.

The new Chevrolet Aveo is available in two models, a 5-speed manual transmission and a 4-speed automatic. Available colors are Sparking Tan, Black Sapphire, Citrus Green, Light Quartz Gray, Royal Gray and Sterling Silver Metallic.

Ask Gibs:

A bullet-review, and advice on-the-fly

Hot, hot interior

Dear Gibs: How can I bring down the excess heat of my car's interior when parked under the sun?

An exposed car is literally baked under the sun, causing damage to the interior and may even melt your CDs. Even with the sunshade on your dash and tints all around your windows, the ultraviolet rays alone are enough to ruin the paint and crack your dashboard. A car's interior can reach temperatures exceeding water's boiling point.

I remember a trip to Arizona, and a friend gave me this tip: Open the left and right car windows slightly (around 1 or 2 fingers thick) so that the hot gases inside the car can easily seep out through convection, lessening the "greenhouse" effect inside your car. You'll notice the interior will be a lot cooler as soon as you come back and enter the car. This will also lessen the strain on your air conditioning system as it won't have to work so hard anymore to bring your car's interior temperature down.

The downside, though, is that with your windows opened, you will now have to worry about car thieves. Oh well, you just can't have everything your way, can you?

A new-generation economy car for the new-generation motorist

THE NEW GENERATION OF CAR buyers are going on a budget. New car buyers such as students, newlyweds, even yuppies watching every penny spent start off their options with the subcompact range of 1.5 liter-and-below category.

Those looking for a decent-sized sedan that doesn't look like a shoebox would have to take a closer look at the Nissan Sentra 1.3 A/T. Most budget-conscious motorists would find this an honest-to-goodness sedan with an ultra economical 1.3-liter engine and automatic transmission. We prefer the automatic transmission, particularly during this Holiday season, because the horrendous traffic along the major thoroughfares in Metro Manila will make anyone driving manual go berserk.

Straight from the factory, the 1.3 AT Sentra is no slouch. It may not have all the frills of the 1.8 or even the 1.6-liter, but it is well-appointed with its accessories and the interior. The 1,3 AT Sentra can still be considered a family car with the looks of the 1.6 and 1.8 (sans the leather seats and sunroof, of course), which may explain why it has become a best-seller among fleet accounts (hotels and rentals).

This is a wise business move by Nissan, for the simple reason that the Nissan Sentra 1.3 A/T is simple, practical and has no extra cost.

You may not need it yet, but one more thing you will appreciate with the Sentra 1.3—or with any Nissan Sentra sedan for that matter—is the ultra-powerful air conditioning system. Sentras are known for that Arctic blast even in the middle of the noon time Metro Manila summer.

Well, who needs the air-con when you're already cool under the collar driving the Sentra 1.3 A/T? You're not only driving relatively comfortably, but you're saving lots of gas money as well. *Giby Yalung*

Affordable, high-quality motorcycles from Sinski

THERE ARE MANY ADVANTAGES in owning a motorcycle. It's easy on the pocket, you realize fuel cost savings, and experience absolutely no time delays in work and other appointments. However, like with every aspect of the everyday life, one must choose wisely before buying a motorcycle.

A motorcycle provides solutions to our road agonies and sacrifices. The motorcycle provides a hassle free traveling experience as it can be maneuvered through gutters and in-between car spaces further eliminating traffic woes. Most of all, the motorcycle is inexpensive, is ISO 9001 certified (International Quality Standard), fuel efficient and conforms to the Clean Air Act.

Sinski Philippines that started its operations way back 2001 is a joint venture between the Philippines and Sinski China. This means there is explicit and direct coordination and cooperation between the manufacturer and distributor, thus providing superior quality, ample parts supply and excellent after sales service to meet the increasing demand of the riding public. Sinski Phils adheres and implements the best Japanese standards in the production line.

Sinski China ensures the quality of every product marketed here in the Philippines by sending their own technical personnel. Their main objective is to implement total quality control to ensure that every motorcycle unit meets the strict standards which Sinski is known for. Therefore, every unit delivered to dealers nationwide is assured of meeting the highest quality standards.

Sinski's unchanging commitment is to provide high quality and affordable motorcycles. Sinski, the best alternative motoring partner for motorcycle enthusiasts and owners alike is a trusted brand in terms of riding comfort, convenience, dependability, durability and affordability.

For more information about Sinski and its product line-ups and specifications, log on to http:// www.sinski.com.ph. Or go directly to the nearest Sinski dealer in your area.

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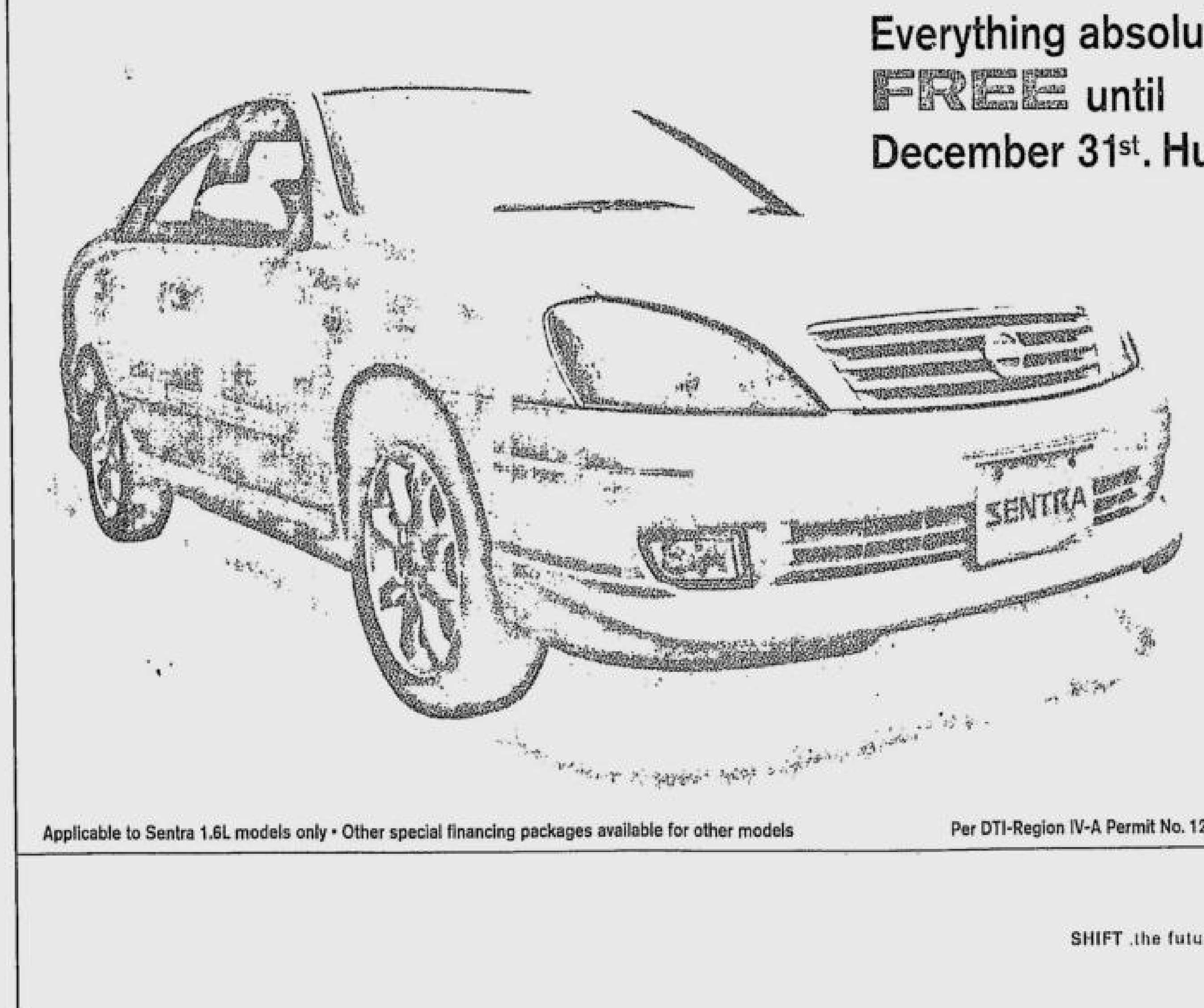

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Big boys' list for Santa includes...

Looking for naughty-looking gifts for motorists who have been nice on the road the whole year round? Here are some nice starters, and you don't have to fly to the North Pole to get them.

Thule load system carrier

WHAT BETTER WAY IS THERE TO COMPLIMENT the classy and elegant Subaru Legacy than a Thule load system carrier? Designed to make traveling more convenient and pleasurable for your family, Thule's line of roof racks and load carriers are geared towards active individuals and families who like to explore the great outdoors. Thule provides you with the solution to maximize the load capacity of your car, AUV or SUVs. Unlike locally manufactured load carriers, Thule has an easy snap on, snap off feature which lets you install the load carriers with ease.

With Thule, there's no drilling required, it is guaranteed safe from rust, and is wind tunnel tested to aerodynamically complement the exterior design of any vehicle. Thule's line of load carriers are 100-percent machine made from Sweden and has passed the four seasons test of the ISO. Thule is the only accredited OEM designer in the local market and is a proud supplier of load carriers for brands such as Ford, Volvo, Land Rover, Nissan, Toyota, GM, BMW, Subaru and Mercedes Benz.

All Thule roof racks and boxes are theft- and water-proof, which makes your personal effects safe even during the rainy season. The aerodynamic design provides a sleek look to the vehicle. Shown is the Subaru Legacy equipped with Thule's X1 Roof Box and top mounted bike carrier system. For more information on how to gear up and make your Holiday vacation a more adventurous one, load up and visit the Subaru-Thule display at the Motor Image Showroom along Edsa or at the Thule-EGR Showrooms in Ortigas Avenue with telephone numbers 744-6367 and Pasong Tamo at 892-7847 or log on to www.thule.com.

No walk in the park for bad boys

IN AN EFFORT TO CONTRIBUTE to the safety and security of the community this Holiday season, a group of companies led by Atoy Bodykits, Xenon-Bulbs, Bilstein and Concept One customized a police patrol car of San Juan's police force. The project car is in line with Mayor JV Ejercito's campaign to fight crime, to boost the image and morale of not just the police force, but the community as well.

The once battered and bruised Toyota Altis now represents the newest face of law enforcement. Coated in San Juan Police Force signature black and white color motif, the Altis was fitted with an A-Toy wraparound ground effects body and rear deck spoiler. "This kit gave the car a more rugged, aggressive and wider stance," says Atoy Llave of A-Toy Bodykits.

POLICE
SAN JUAN POLICE

Complementing the car's body kit is a set of Concept One's NFS 1 wrapped in grippy Nitto tires. "This would provide the much needed traction during high-speed maneuvers," states Sammy Liuson of Concept One. "It could well be the most visually appealing cop car in the country today. It's a one of kind creation guaranteed to up the ante of patrol cars," adds Liuson. Expanding its capabilities during nighttime patrolling are the extreme illumination and high-intensity discharge lighting courtesy of Xenon-Bulbs. Providing stability and control to the car are the suspension tweaking done by the Bilstein Shocks and a set of ground hugging H&R springs. To give it more bite, plans are in the pipeline for Speedlab to install a Nitrous kit that would give the car an additional 50 more horses under the hood with a push of the button. A car graphics external design was also provided by Winner Car Graphics.

With a car boasting of show-and-go features, San Juan Police Chief Col. Rodelio B. Jocson says that their campaign against criminality is given an extra boost. "We now have a car that can catch up with law breakers. We can also report at the scene of the crime much faster than the usual. I hope this will bridge the gap and strengthen community involvement," says the Police Superintendent. The customized Altis is part of the "Black and White" squad organized by the San Juan Police Force to beef up security in the Greenhills Commercial area in observance of the Yuletide season.

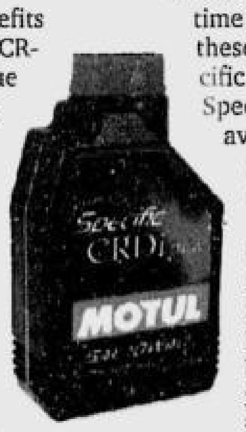
Specific oil for true performance

MORE CRDI CAR OWNERS ARE now experiencing the true performance and power of their engines after switching to Motul Specific CRDi Diesel Oil.

MOTUL
MOTUL

Motul Specific CRDi Diesel is oil specifically formulated for powerful diesel engines fitted with common rail direct injection. Considered a breakthrough in the automotive industry, diesel engines with CRDi systems give better emissions amidst the great performance it delivers. Known also for its fuel efficiency and driving comfort it provides, common rail diesel engines have come with different identities: Audi-TDi; BMW-Di Diesel; Chrysler-CDI/CRD; Ford-TDCi; Hyundai-CRDi; Isuzu-Di; Kia-CRDi; Mercedez Benz-CDI; Mitsubishi-DDi; SsangYong-Xdi; Toyota-D4D.

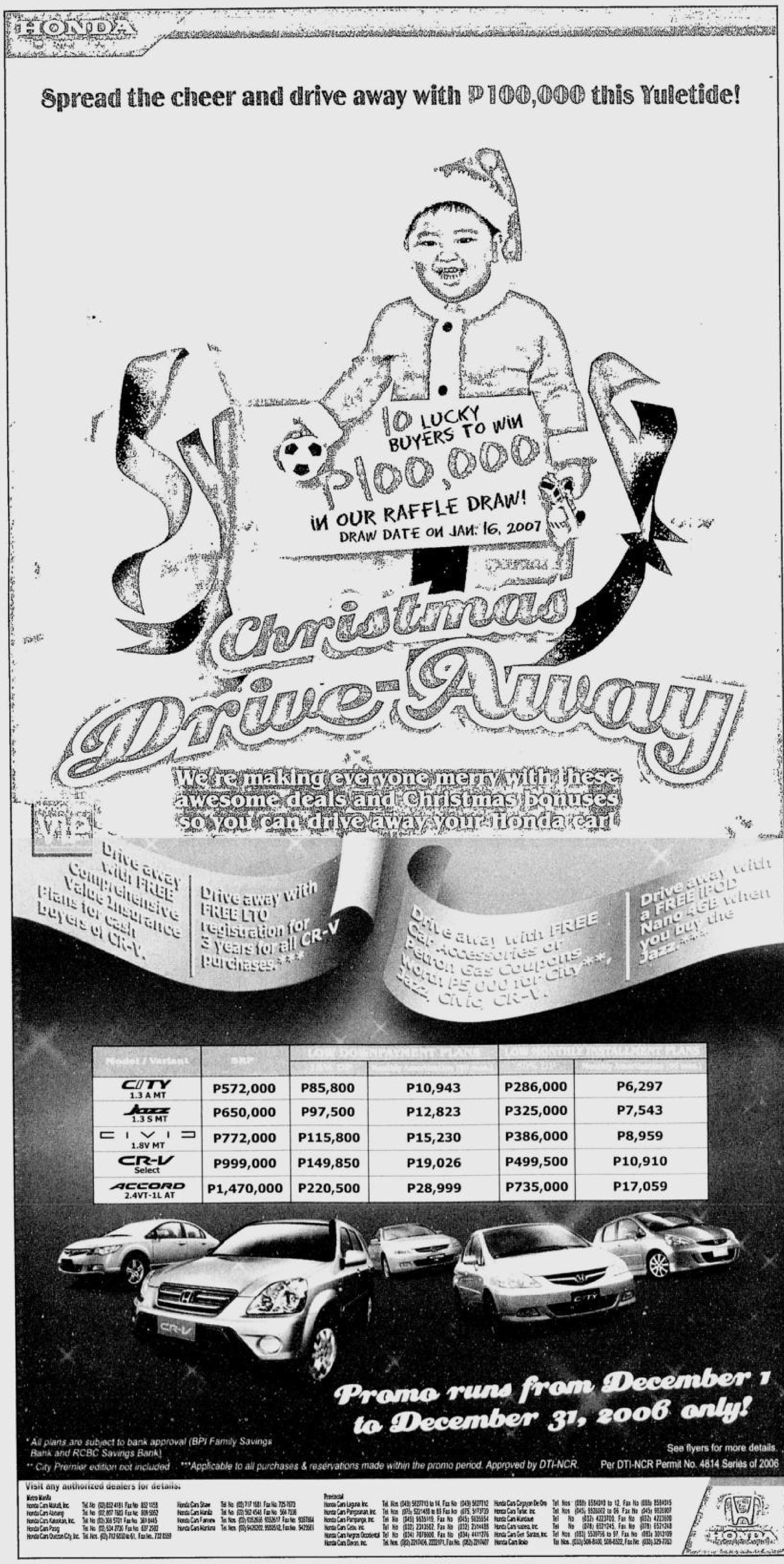
To realize the benefits and performance of CR-Di, Motul, being true to its pioneering spirit, formulated the Specific CRDi Diesel oil. The high-pressure fuel being distributed in the injectors then to the cylinders, which result to precise and better combustion, creates higher temperature that magnifies the chances of deposits and sludge around the piston ring zone and high rate of oxidation that causes the oil to break down.



In maintaining and maximizing the performance of an engine, selecting the right oil for a specific application is necessary. This is where Motul Specific CRDi Diesel Oil comes in-it is designed to address and control the high temperature an engine with CRDi creates. Its reinforced synthetic base stock provides very high lubricating power that reduces friction and ensures protection against bore polishing, plus piston and piston grooves cleanliness. This Technosynthese engine oil also provides an outstanding detergent/dispersant performance to deal with additional soot/deposits coming from the environment and inside the engine, hence improving oil lifetime with better resistance to viscosity increase.

As the Motul van has experienced, "it lets the engine perform its best-fuel savings improved, noise at high speed is gone, and drivability is always at peak, which also improved our delivery time in servicing dealers". With these encouraging results, Specific LL-01 (for BMWs) and Specific MB 229.5 were made available for people to use on their sophisticated cars.

For information on how to experience true performance, visit Autoplus Sportzentrium at 233 Edsa, Mandaluyong (southbound) or call 726-3066/726-0399 or e-mail info@auto-plus.com.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CIVIC 1.8V MT	P772,000	P115,800	P15,230	P386,000	P8,959
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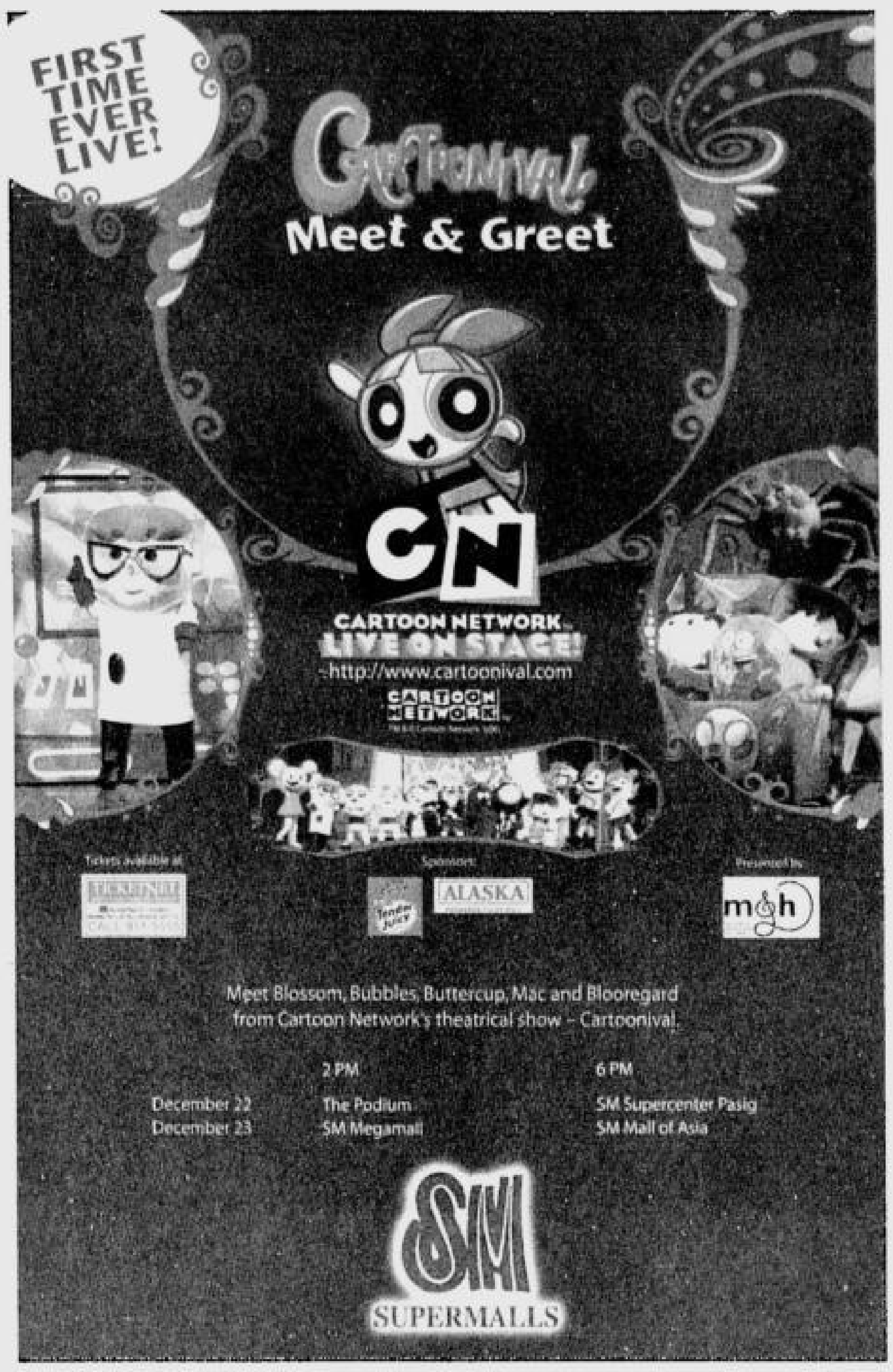
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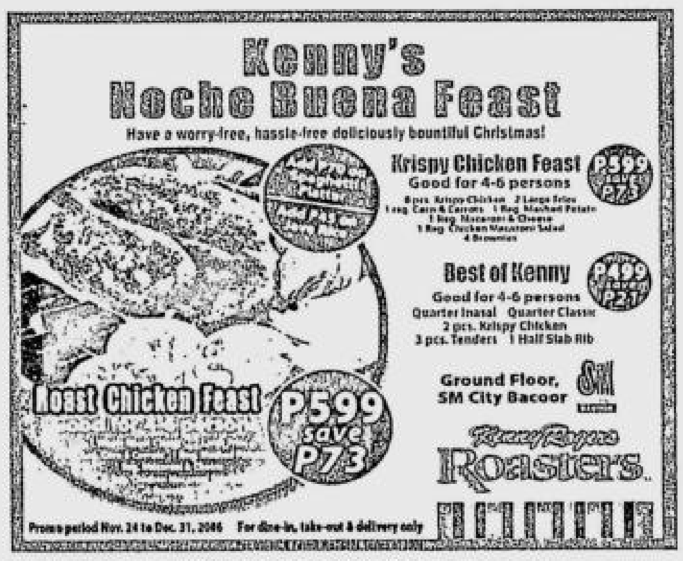
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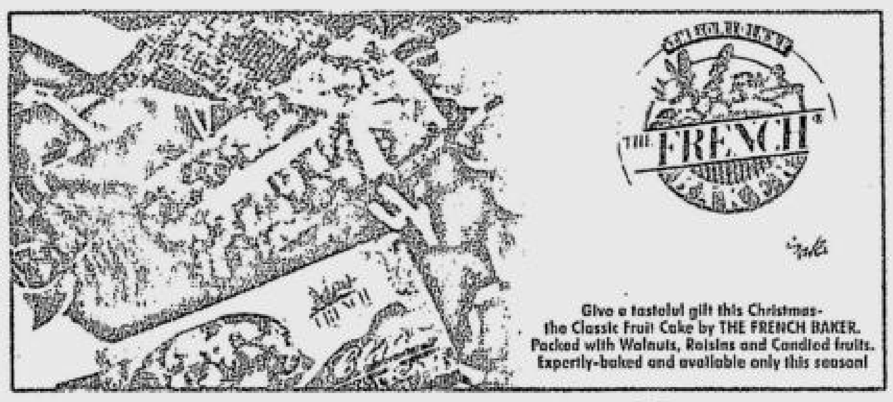
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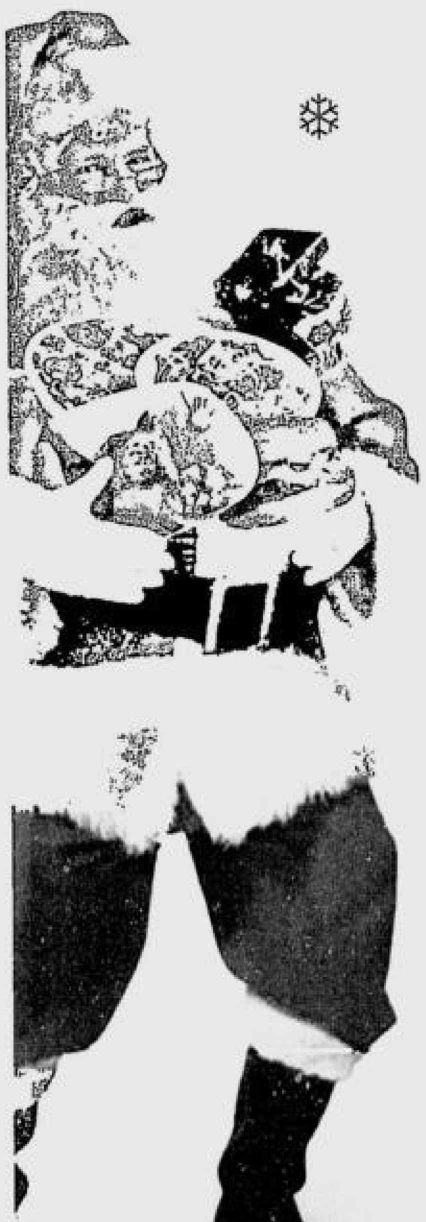

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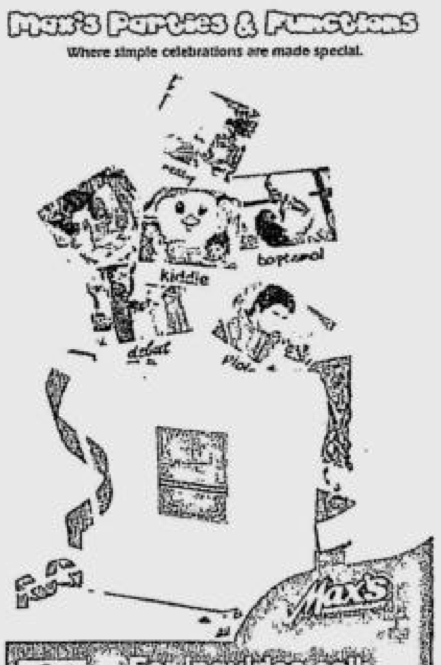
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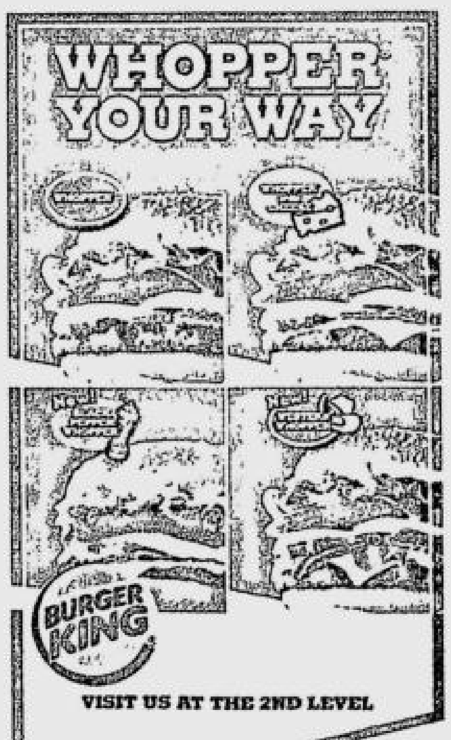
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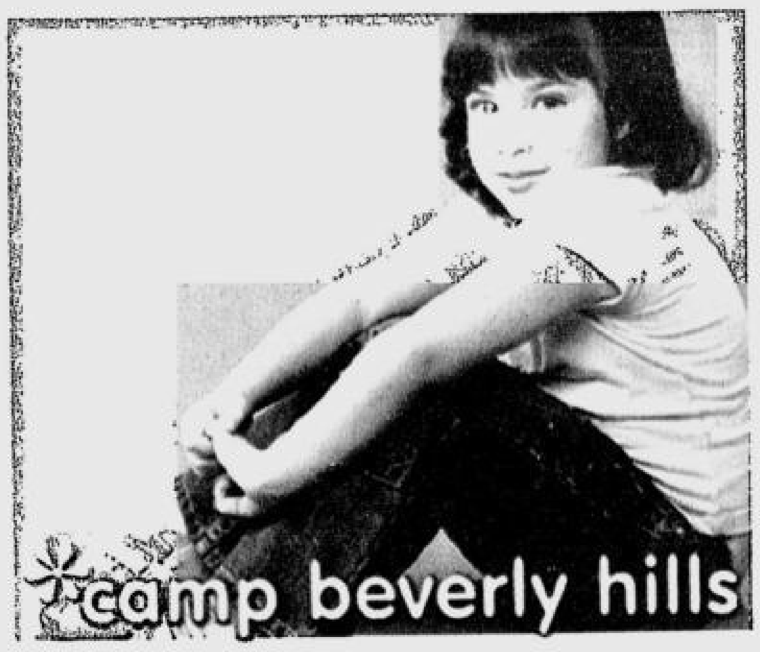
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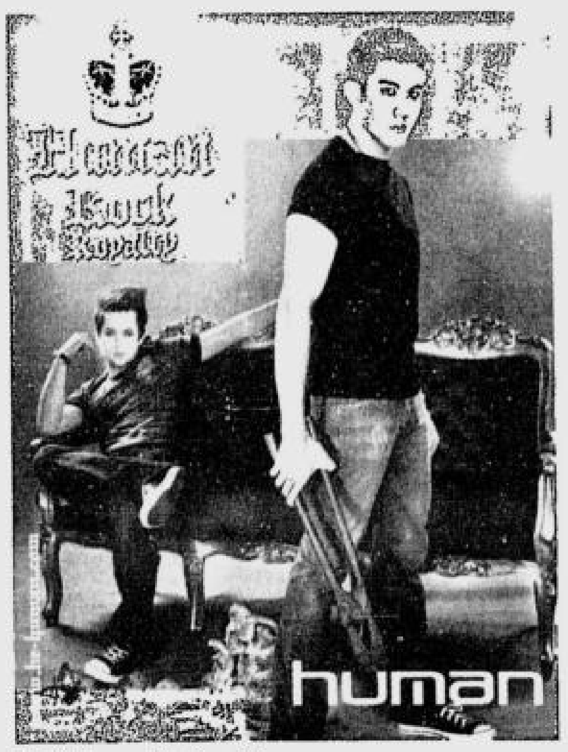
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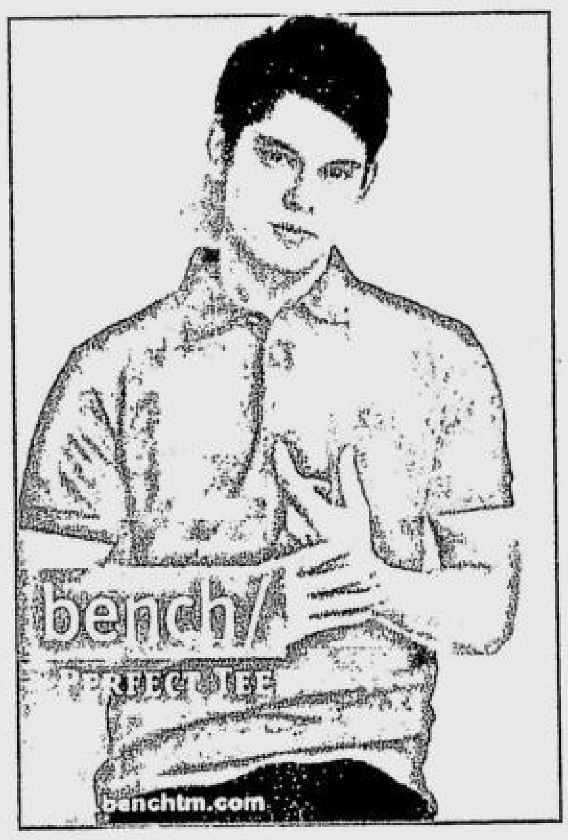
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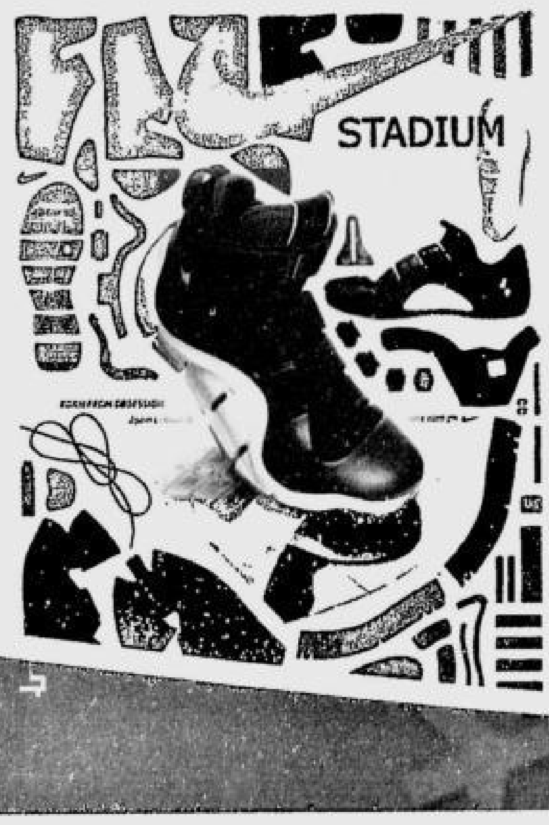

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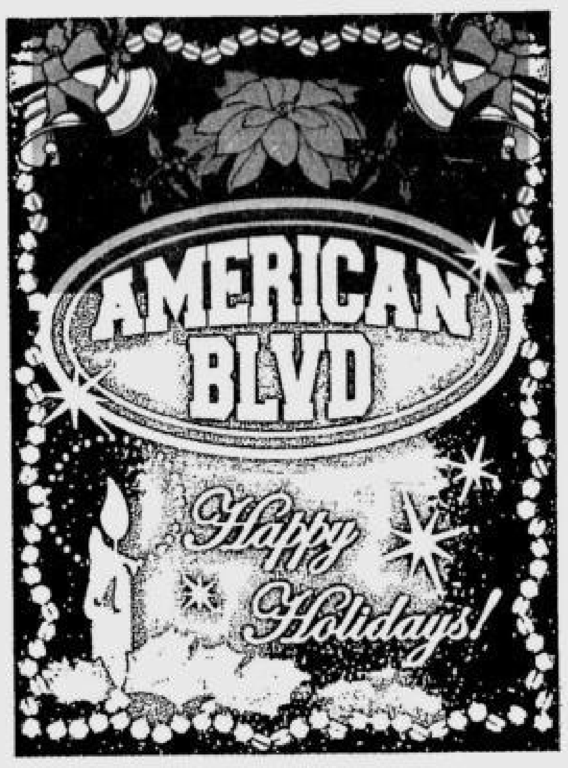
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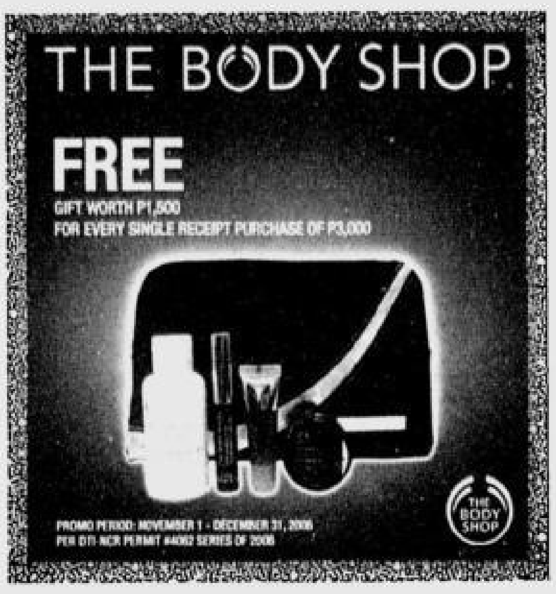

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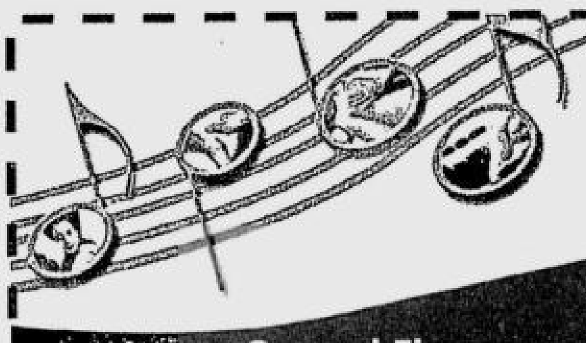

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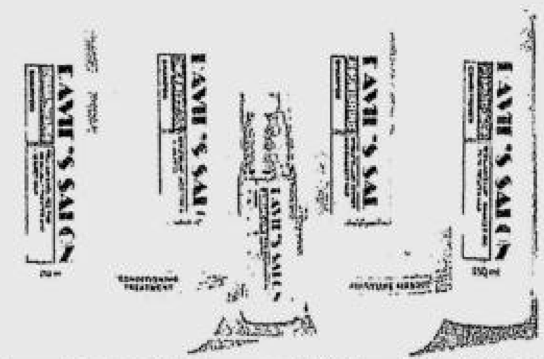

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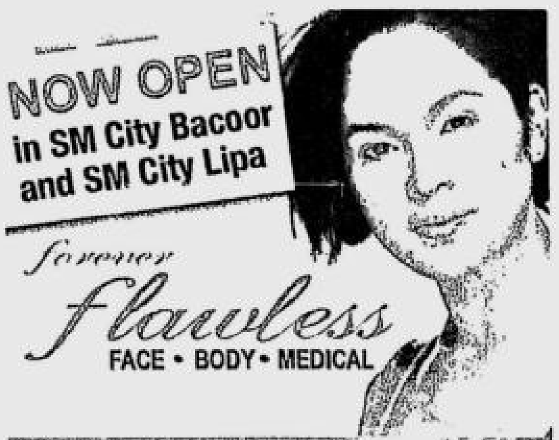

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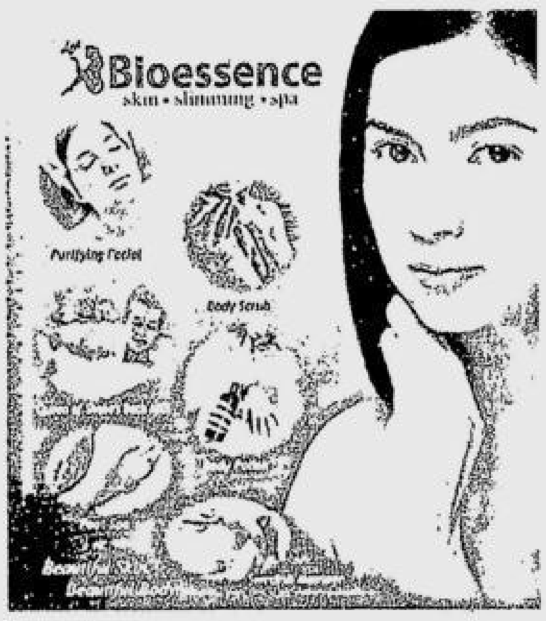

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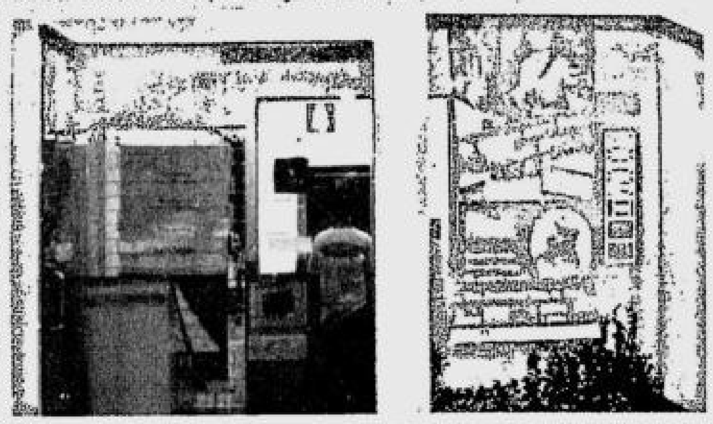

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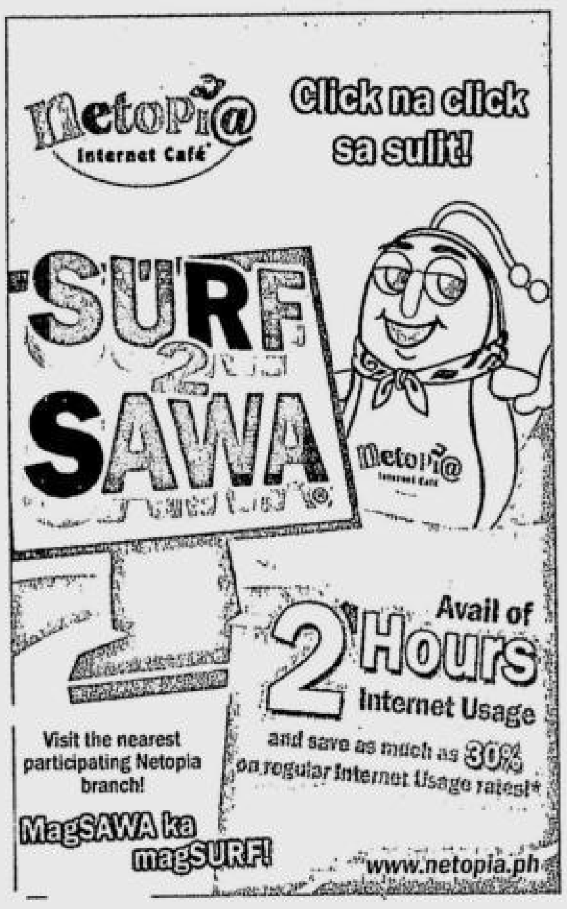
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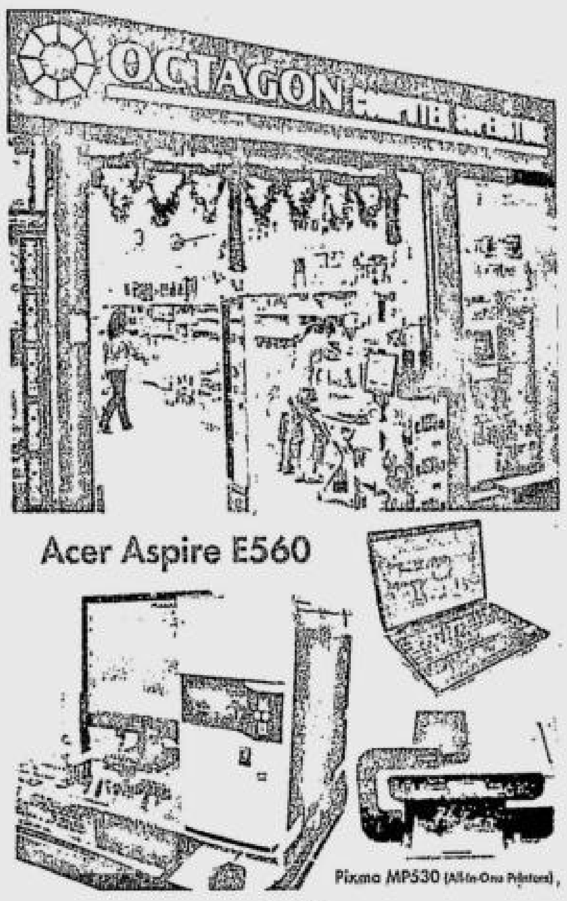
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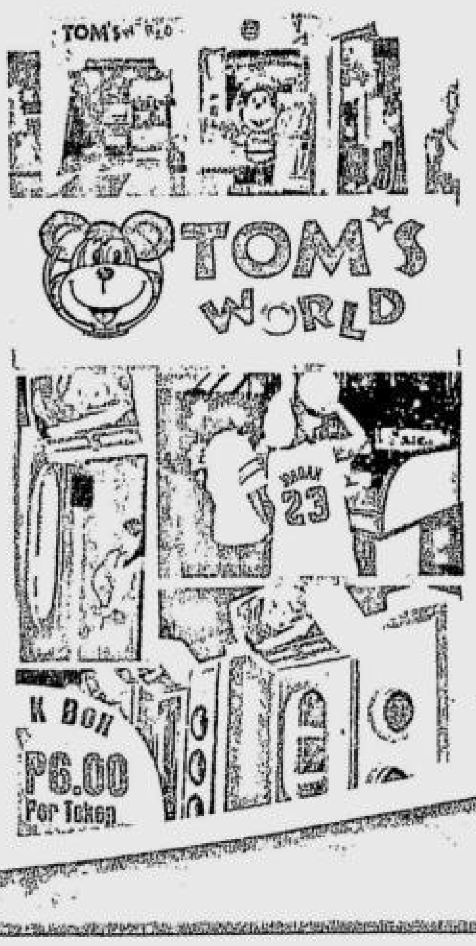
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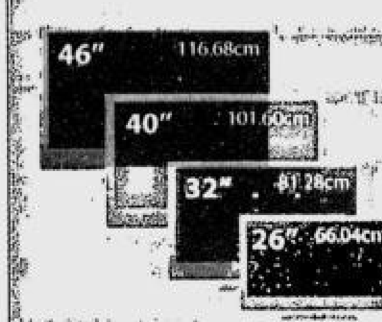

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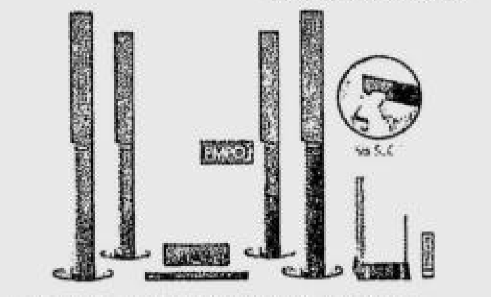

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- Sensitivity: 104 dB
- Voice coil: CCAW
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HS4700
P949

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12 mos. 0%
FREE MICROPHONE

HTZ151DVD
USB SLOT
- DVD/DVD-R/DVD-RW/VCD/SVCD DTS CD/CD/CD-R/CD-RW/WMA MP3 JPEG Player, DivX, DTS Dolby Digital Dolby Pro Logic II
- 5 speaker system with 3-spot front surround speaker layout, center speaker and subwoofer

SRP P14,990
P2,498.34
6 mos. 0%
FREE 256MB MP3 PLAYER

SHARP

DVSL1500W
Progressive Scan DVD Player with Stylish & Ultra Slim Design & Dual Karaoke with Unique Scoring Function

SRP: P3,99
P666.34
6 mos. 0%

FREE TV RACK
MP3 PLAYER

21V-FR80M
21" Mono Sound
- 181 Channel Cable Compatible Tuner
- Blue Screen
- Auto Demo Mode
- Energy Save
- Sleep/View Timer

SRP: P8,998
P749.84
12 mos. 0%

FREE WATER BOTTLE

14V-R70M
- 181 Channel Cable-Compatible Tuner
- EZ Set-up
- Three Language Menu on Screen
- Energy Save Function

P4,598

SONY

KV-SW212N50
- Intelligent Picture Plus
- Intelligent Picture Signal Indicator
- Intelligent Signal Booster
- DVD Component & V-Compression
- AV Stereo: 5W+5W
- 5 Band Graphic Equalizer
- Wega Gate Navigator
- Wake Up Timer Beep
- Cosmetic Design
- Top Control

FREE SWEGA CD+DVD
ADD P3,499
GET DVD PLAYER DVP-NS51P
ADD P100
GET A TV RACK
SRP: P10,990
P915.84
12 mos. 0%

DCR-HC36
- 1/6" CCD
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar Lens
- 2.5" LCD Monitor
- 20x Optical Zoom
- 9 hrs. stamina
- Memory Stick Duo slot

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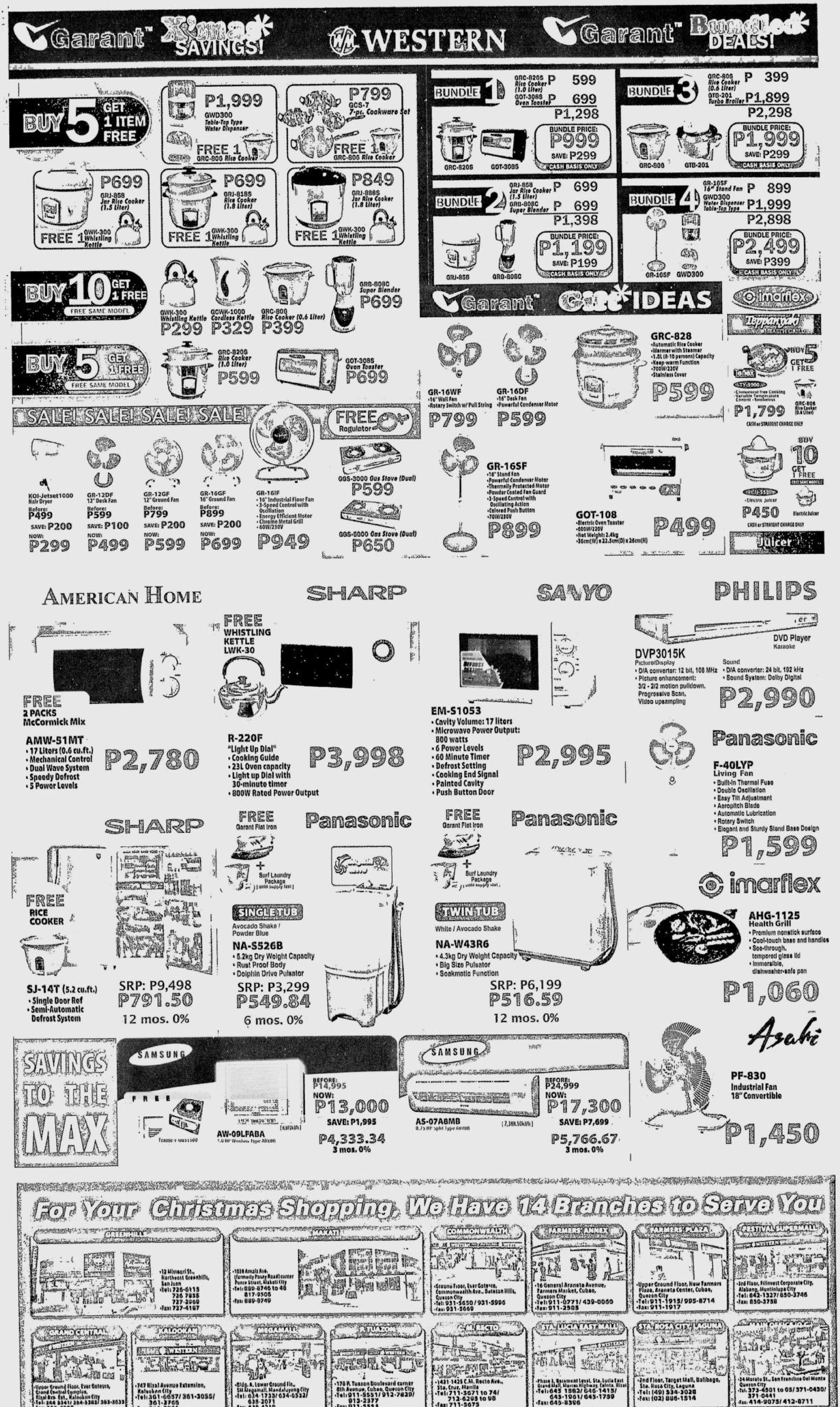
Bag, Pouch, 3pcs Mini DV Tape
SRP: P26,999
P2,249.92
12 mos. 0%

DSC-S500
- 6.0 Mega Pixels Super HAD CCD
- Large 2.4" LCD Screen with Wide Viewing Angle
- 25MB Internal Memory
- Sony Lens
- 3x Optical Zoom, 2x Digital Zoom

FREE
LCSBDA, KC Table Top Calendar
SRP: P11,999
P1,999.84
6 mos. 0%



Garant™ Xmas SAVINGS!

WESTERN

Garant™ Bundled DEALS!

BUY 5 GET 1 ITEM FREE

P1,999
GWD300
Table-Top Type Water Dispenser
FREE 1 GRC-806 Rice Cooker

P799
GCS-7
7-pc. Cookware Set
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P699
GRJ-858
Jar Rice Cooker (1.5 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

P699
GRJ-818S
Rice Cooker (1.8 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

P849
GRJ-888S
Jar Rice Cooker (1.8 Liter)
FREE 1 GWK-300 Whistling Kettle

BUY 10 GET 1 FREE
FREE SAME MODEL

GWK-300 Whistling Kettle P299
GCWK-1000 Cordless Kettle P329
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter) P399
GRB-808C Super Blender P699

BUY 5 GET 1 FREE
FREE SAME MODEL

GRC-820S Rice Cooker (1.0 Liter) P599
GOT-308S Oven Toaster P699

BUNDLE 1
GRC-820S Rice Cooker (1.0 Liter) P 599
GOT-308S Oven Toaster P 699
P1,298
BUNDLE PRICE: P999
SAVE: P299
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRC-820S GOT-308S

BUNDLE 2
GRJ-858 Jar Rice Cooker (1.5 Liter) P 699
GRB-808C Super Blender P 699
P1,398
BUNDLE PRICE: P1,199
SAVE: P199
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRJ-858 GRB-808C

BUNDLE 3
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter) P 399
GTB-201 Turbo Broiler P1,899
P2,298
BUNDLE PRICE: P1,999
SAVE: P299
CASH BASIS ONLY
GRC-806 GTB-201

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GR-16SF 16" Stand Fan P 899
GWD300 Water Dispenser Table-Top Type P1,999
P2,898
BUNDLE PRICE: P2,499
SAVE: P399
CASH BASIS ONLY
GR-16SF GWD300

Garant™ Gift IDEAS

GR-16WF
- 16" Wall Fan
- Rotary Switch w/ Pull String

P799

GR-16DF
- 16" Desk Fan
- Powerful Condenser Motor

P599

GRC-828
- Automatic Rice Cooker
- Warmer with Steamer
- 1.8L (8-10 persons) Capacity
- Keep-warm Function
- 700W/220V
- Stainless Cover

P599

GR-16SF
- 16" Stand Fan
- Powerful Condenser Motor
- Thermally Protected Motor
- Powder Coated Fan Guard
- 3-Speed Control with Oscillating Action
- Colored Push Button
- 70W/230V

P899

GOT-108
- Electric Oven Toaster
- 600W/220V
- Net Weight: 2.4kg
- 30cm(W) x 22.5cm(D) x 26cm(H)

P499

imarflex
Teppanyaki HEALTH GRILL
BUY 5 GET 1 FREE
Teflex
TY-3000
- Cholesterol free Cooking
- Variable Temperature Control · Smokeless

P1,799
GRC-806 Rice Cooker (0.6 Liter)
CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY

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FREE SAME MODEL
IJ-55
- Electric Juicer

P450
Electric Juicer
CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY
Juicer

SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!

KOI-Jetset1000 Hair Dryer
Before: P499
SAVE: P200
NOW: P299

GR-12DF 12" Desk Fan
Before: P599
SAVE: P100
NOW: P499

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Before: P799
SAVE: P200
NOW: P599

GR-16GF 16" Ground Fan
Before: P899
SAVE: P200
NOW: P699

GR-16IF
- 16" Industrial Floor Fan
- 3-Speed Control with Oscillation
- Energy Efficient Motor
- Chrome Metal Grill
- 60W/230V

P949

FREE Regulator
GGS-3000 Gas Stove (Dual) P599
GGS-5000 Gas Stove (Dual) P650

AMERICAN HOME

FREE 2 PACKS McCormick Mix

AMW-51MT
- 17 Liters (0.6 cu.ft.)
- Mechanical Control
- Dual Wave System
- Speedy Defrost
- 5 Power Levels

P2,780

SHARP

FREE WHISTLING KETTLE LWK-30

R-220F
"Light Up Dial"
- Cooking Guide
- 23L Oven capacity
- Light up Dial with 30-minute timer
- 800W Rated Power Output

P3,998

SANYO

EM-S1053
- Cavity Volume: 17 liters
- Microwave Power Output: 800 watts
- 6 Power Levels
- 60 Minute Timer
- Defrost Setting
- Cooking End Signal
- Painted Cavity
- Push Button Door

P2,995

PHILIPS

DVD Player
Karaoke
DVP3015K
Picture/Display
- D/A converter: 12 bit, 108 MHz
- Picture enhancement: 3/2 - 2/2 motion pulldown, Progressive Scan, Video upsampling

Sound
- D/A converter: 24 bit, 192 kHz
- Sound System: Dolby Digital

P2,990

Panasonic

F-40LYP
Living Fan
- Built-in Thermal Fuse
- Double Oscillation
- Easy Tilt Adjustment
- Aeropitch Blade
- Automatic Lubrication
- Rotary Switch
- Elegant and Sturdy Stand Base Design

P1,599

SHARP

FREE RICE COOKER

SJ-14T (5.2 cu.ft.)
- Single Door Ref
- Semi-Automatic Defrost System

SRP: P9,498
P791.50
12 mos. 0%

Panasonic

FREE Garant Flat Iron + Surf Laundry Package (until supply last)

SINGLE TUB
Avocado Shake / Powder Blue
NA-S526B
- 5.2kg Dry Weight Capacity
- Rust Proof Body
- Dolphin Drive Pulsator

SRP: P3,299
P549.84
6 mos. 0%

Panasonic

FREE Garant Flat Iron + Surf Laundry Package (until supply last)

TWIN TUB
White / Avocado Shake
NA-W43R6
- 4.3kg Dry Weight Capacity
- Big Size Pulsator
- Soakmatic Function

SRP: P6,199
P516.59
12 mos. 0%

imarflex

AHG-1125
Health Grill
- Premium nonstick surface
- Cool-touch base and handles
- See-through, tempered glass lid
- Immersible, dishwasher-safe pan

P1,060

SAVINGS TO THE MAX

SAMSUNG
FREE
Frame + Installation
AW-09LFABA
1.0 HP Window Type Aircon
BEFORE: P14,995
NOW: P13,000
SAVE: P1,995
P4,333.34
3 mos. 0%

SAMSUNG
AS-07A8MB
0.75 HP Split Type Aircon
[7,388.50kJ/h]
BEFORE: P24,999
NOW: P17,300
SAVE: P7,699
P5,766.67
3 mos. 0%

Asahi

PF-830
Industrial Fan
18" Convertible

P1,450

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- Tel: 842-1327 / 850-3746
- Fax: 850-3758

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- Tel: 364-5341 / 364-5302 / 363-3633
- Fax: 366-4503

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- Fax: 361-2751

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